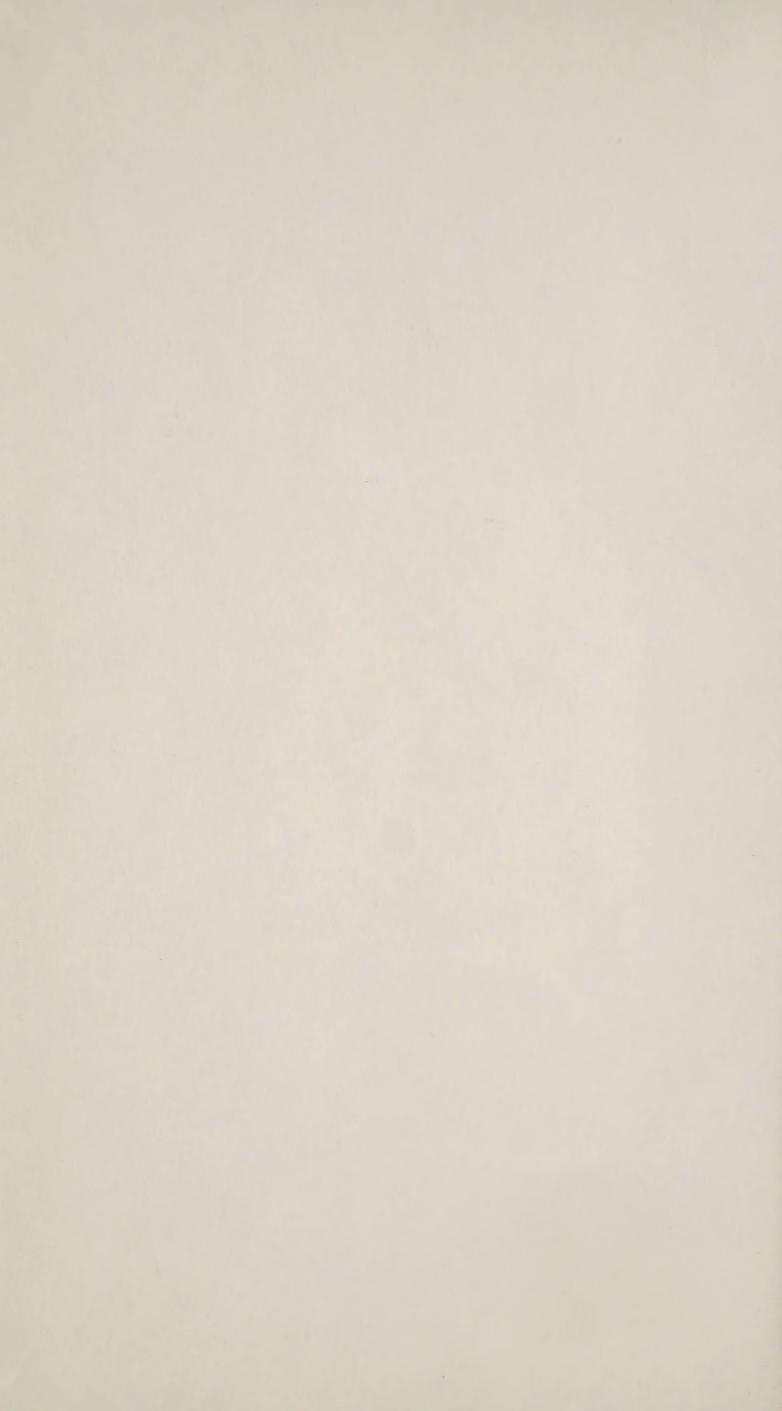
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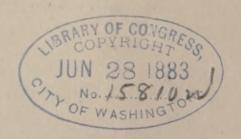


BLACK AND WHITE,

-A NOVEL-

BY E. A. MERIWETHER,

AUTHOR OF "THE MASTER OF RED LEAF," "MY FIRST AND LAST LOVE," "KU KLUX KLAN," ETC.



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CONTENTS:

CHAPTERS.	PAGE.
I.—Introduces the Reader to two Important Characters	
II.—The Finisher Institute	
III.—The Young Lawyer—"A Speech is a Speech"	
IV.—The Christmas-Box	
V.—Paying the Penalty	
VIReturns to the Finisher Institute and relates how the	
Christmas Feast did not turn out as anticipated	39
VIIA meeting after six years	47
VIIIThe Three Students	60
IXDolly's mind becomes curious on a Philological Question	
XChristmas-Day Dawned	
XIYouth and beautty—Love and Logic	
XIITheories and Experiments	
XIIIMr. Arthur inspects the two Wealthy Women and Makes	
his Choice	103
XIVDolly and the Locksmith	110
XVMrs. Singleton's Schemes	116
XVICalyx and his Sister receive their Friends	120
XVIILove and Jealousy	
XVIII The Island Girls are called Home-Mrs. Singleton is dis-	
appointed and Miss Mopson feels that she is per-	0
cuted	130
XIXAshford Isle	135
XXThe Singletons	138
XXIHow Roma's letter was received by her Lover	144
XXII,They gather together to read the Will, but no Will is	
found	147
XXIIIThe Objectionable Husband assumes the Mastership	156
XXIVThe Singltons are grievously disappointed	
XXVWhich the Reader may skip if he does not like our Young	
People's Vagaries	
XXVIDolly suggests a way to settle the Usurper	
XVII The Negro Auction comes off—The Ashcourt negroes in	
great tribulation	
XVIIIDolly to the Front	190
XXIXMrs. Singleton makes Love to the gushing Widow for her	
Handsome Brother	
XXXIs it Love or is it Fancy	
XXXISingleton visits the Island	
XXIIAn Interview at Last	237

CONTENTS:

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13	If a little bearing the bearing and the little
	The Young Lawrist - " Siers it is a Spine Law
	The Charles of the Ch
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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCES THE READER TO TWO IMPORTANT CHARACTERS WHICH ARE SEEN, HOWEVER, UNDER RATHER UNFAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES.

Two officers of the police force, well buttoned up in their great coats, for the night was cold and the wind keen and cutting, bore the burden they were carrying into the station and dumped it down on the floor as if it were a sack of corn or potatoes. It was neither corn or potatoes but a woman that lay senseless just as she had fallen from their grasp—a large framed woman, grandly developed. The two men looked down on the full flushed face which doubtless had been handsome enough before vice had discolored and deformed it, had coarsened both complexion and contour. A stream of long fair hair loosed from its fastenings fell to the floor and spread itself out as if for exhibition, it was well worth exhibition, being abundant in quantity, bright in color and fine in texture.

The little old man in a snuffy thread bare coat, with a worried face, who stood at a desk before an open ledger, turned a dull, abstracted eye on the new comers, said nothing, turned again to the figures on the page before him and went on with his work.

One of the policemen, a short, thick-necked fellow, with the unmistakable marks of his master, drink, spread over his face, took off his fur cap and mopped the top of his bald head as he glanced down at the woman whose weight had fatigued him. Hagan was the short man's name. Prichett, his companion, was taller, younger, handsomer and not disfigured by drink.

"She's no baby" said Hagan, with gloomy ill temper. as he glowered on the senseless creature at his feet, "hang me if she didn't take the wind out of me—the huzzy! I've no patience

with drinking women!"

"Oh you did'nt have much to take, Hagan," laughed Prichett, good humoredly, "put yourself on bread and water for a

"Here I've been on the force going on ten year" said Mr. Hagan aloud, looking to Podgers for sympathy, "an my opinion goes for nothing, eh? Here's Prichett, a new comer, you may say, not a year yet, an he thinks he knows it all!"

Mr. Prichett said he laid no claim to universal knowledge and admitted that Mr. Hagan must have a pretty good idea of drunkenness, yet somehow he could'nt help suspecting laudanum.

"See for yourself, Podgers!" Interrupted Hagan, irritably, taking another bite from the plug, "see for yourself, pull up the woman's eye-lids, if you don't find the signs of gin, my name's not

Bill Hagan, that's all."

Prichett said he never meant to say the signs of gin would'nt be found in the woman's eyes—he didn't need to look at her eyes to see such signs, they were spread all over her face—what he meant to say was that for this particular spell he suspected laudanum.

Mr. Podgers, who always instinctively inclined to Hagan's side, acted on his suggestion, again wiped his pen, stuck it behind his ear and again, with that owlish air of solemnity men of small mind and body are apt to put on to enhance their dignity, took up the lamp and held it so that it better illuminated the figure on the floor. Applying a stubby fore-finger and a stubbier thumb, Mr. Podgers lifted the woman's left eye-lid and solemnly peered into the eye, then he lifted the right eye-lid and solemnly peered into that. Not deigning to speak of the discoveries he made or the signs he saw, Mr. Podger contented himself with a slight wave of his hand.

"Take her to the lock-up," he said hoarsely and then went back

to the figures and on with the wrestling.

"Come, Hagan, lend a hand" said Prichett, taking the woman by the shoulders, but before the flushed Mr. Hagan felt equal to the exertion he felt the necessity of refreshing himself with a pull at a flat bottle which he carried in his side pocket, after which invigorating proceedure, he seized the woman's two ancles and the two men conveyed her out of the room into a narrow corridor illuminated by a smoky lamp. At the far end of this corridor a door with a grating in the upper part, opened into the lock-up used for the lodgement of women—women arrested for petty larceny, disorderly conduct, drunkenness and other misbehavior. The lockup was a large oblong apartment furnished with wooden benches ranged around the wall.

When the two policemen with their senseless burden entered this apartment it already contained a large number of unfortunate wretches incarcerated for one misdemeanor or another, mostly for drunkenness. Of this number only a very small proportion was sober. The greater number were more or less intoxicated, some lay sprawled on the floor in a drunken stupor, some sat on the benches in a semi-maudlin condition, some walked about with wild eyes wringing their wretched hands. Moans, groans and histerical cries filled the miserable place

Vice ruled and reigned, yet all of these pitiable subjects of vice were of that sex we are in the habit of looking upon as better and purer than the stronger. In estimating the condition or qualities of a class the condition and quality of all should be considered. When speaking of the condition of women collectively, men make the mistake of not "counting in" the degraded classes, yet these comprise no insignificant part of the whole, are an outgrowth of past and present institutions just as the better classes are. Not to consider the bad classes of the female sex is like the wisdom of the medical man who looks upon a cancer or an ulcer as something for which the whole system is not responsible. The philosophic physician knows that cancers and ulcers are caused by diseased blood, and that not one atom of blood is perfectly pure, unless all and every part of the body is also sound and pure. The same principle holds in moral as in physical disease. The outcast class is the cancerous growth on the body politic. The same principle holds in moral as in physical disease. Laws may repress and restrain but until the source of the impurity is searched for, found and corrected, the growth will continue to crop out in unexpected places, just as the surgeon's knife may cut off cancers but the whole body is not benefited thereby.

The woman was dumped down on the floor in the lock-up just as she had been dumped on the floor in Mr. Podger's office. As she fell she rolled on the outstretched feet of a big black-browed Irish woman who glared at the offender with scowling indignation and drew up her feet as if scalding water had touched them. Mrs. Floyd, for that was the big black-browed lady's name, demanded of the men what they meant by tumbling drunk creeters like that

in the lap of a "rispictible lady?"

A slim, wiry, neatly dressed negress, whose wool was almost concealed by the towering turban she wore on her head, snappishly spoke up. "Spectible? wha's any spectible white lady bout dese diggings? De las one I sees is de po'est sort o' white

trash—de wery po'est sort."

The black's name was Dolly. In some respects Dolly differed from the ordinary negro. She was alert, nimble, nervous as a monkey, quick and cunning, true to those she liked or loved, utterly conscienceless where she did not like or love. She was a full blooded negro but had not the flat nose or the extremely thick lips usually found in the full African, on the contrary her features were rather delicately cut; her eyes small, black as beads and exceedingly vivacious, the balls had a way of dancing from side to side. Dolly also had the power of moving the muscles of her ears as horses do, backward and forward, greatly to the disgust and terror of the Irish lady, Mrs. Floyd. Mrs. Floyd and Dolly were neighbors but not friends; they had been arrested for breaking the peace in one of their many quarrels. Mrs. Flood hated and scorned the "nasty nager," and Dolly hated and scorned "low down Arish trash." Mrs. Flood was the mistress of a small green grocery shop and Dolly was a free negro, living on a quarterly allowance made to her by her master, a rich planter in the South,

in return for a signal service she had once rendered him. This was their first experience of jail life. The Irish lady felt wounded in the tenderest place, pride of character, the negress seemed to forget her own misfortune in the spiteful joy she felt in her enemy's mortification.

Mrs. Flood, deigning no reply to Dolly's impertinence, directed her remarks to the policeman, whom she recognized as an acquaintance, and complained bitterly that the widow of "a officer

same as they was" should be so mistreated.

"What on earth brought you here?" asked Prichett, who knew

her to be an orderly, well behaving, sober woman.

"What brought me?" she cried, eager to ventilate her wrongs, pointing her large fore-finger at the slim, smiling Dolly, who, now that she saw the policeman, appeared as amiable as a May morn, "what brought me? its all long o' her, the devil's own daughter, I'm here. That's what' done it! more disgrace to the perfession me husban' belonged to! Shure an' shure!"

"Why, what have you been at, Dolly?" asked Mr. Prichett, who had a street acquaintance with the negress and knew no harm of her. Dolly always showed her pleasing side to persons in

power.

"Law's Mr. Prichett" said she, in the best of humors, "I doesn't do nuffen 't all, I's de mose peacibul pusson you eber seed in yo' born days. Dar is some pussons, do', Mr. Prichett, as is so quar in der ways dey'd quarl! wid a suckin' dove—you knows

dat, Mr. Prichett!"

Dolly's face being the very picture of innocent amiability both policemen at once jumped to the conclusion that the irascible Irish lady was all to blame. Mrs. Flood, who, a moment before the men came in, had been terrified and enraged by Dolly's mocking movements, the curious grimaces of her features, the workings of her ears, the dancings and dartings of her wonderfully vivacious and viperish little eyes, was now aghast at the sudden change, at the power of deception possessed by this 'daughter of the devil.'

"She's the divil's own daughter—the divil's own daughter!" she cried in anger and affright, which, contrasting with Dolly's

calm and smiling face, still further damaged her case.

"Come! come!" said Prichett, "neighbors shouldn't fall out, it don't pay, shake hands and make up and we'll try and get you

both off easy to-morrow."

"Law's, Mr. Prichett, cries the pleasant Dolly, "I's willin'ter make up! I ain't been fall out yet, I ain't got nuffin 't all agin Miss Flood—Miss Flood's a monsus nice 'ooman, I never sez nuffiin agin' Miss Flood in all my born days; do' dey is some folks in dis wul' so quar, dey picks a quarl 'fo' you knows what ey's up to—you knows dat, Mr. Prichett." And the negress gave one of her most amiable grins.

The two men went out; Dolly was another being. Setting her lean arms akimbo, craning out her turbaned head toward the

darkly glowering and frightened Irish lady, she fixed her little beady black eyes upon her enemy—they seemed to dart flames—she pricked her ears forward and piped out in mocking derision.

"Whyn't you tell dem p'leecemen de trufe? eh? (poking out her turbaned head toward the enemy) whyn't you speak out like a lady—eh? Whyn't you tell 'em de sho' nuff' Gor o' mighty's trufe, what make sech as you always pickin' quarls wid' Dolly Charmon—eh, eh? (the black face and strange ears getting nearer and nearer to the aghast and disgusted white) whyn't you up and tells 'em its beca'se Dolly Charmon b'longs to de grandes' white folks in de state o' Souf Callina? an' she scawns, farly scawns (with intense energy) po' Arish trash! she tromps 'em undah her foot in de dut o' de street—dats wo't you mout a 'splained to dem p'leecemen ef you'd a' knowed how to tell de trufe—eh, eh, eh?''

With each of these "eh's," the black face poked out nearer and nearer to the white which shrank back as the other approached, afraid lest the black should be pressed up and flattened on the white. Cold chills ran down the Irish lady's spinal column.

"Keep off! keep off!" she shrieked jamming the back part of her head against the wall and raising her two hands to defend her face from the despised contact.

Nothing more delighted Dolly than to witness this fright, it

was a tribute to her power.

"Highty-tighty! highedy-pigglety!" she sputtered out with grins and grimaces. "You spec white ladies, wid dark complexions like dis chile's, gwine to demean derselves techin der faces to po' Arish trash? Git out nigger! you don't know quality folks

when you see 'em."

Then she turned on her hecl, fell back a few paces, and began a series of gyrations so mocking, menacing and derisive, as almost to drive her antagonist wild. She twirled her lean body like a top, snapped her fingers in the air as she retreated, and advanced on her enemy, brought her little pointed black ears forward, and made her little black eyes dart such flames at the unfortunate Irish lady as made her ignominiously beat a retreat, turn her back to her tormentor, shut her eyes tightly, and begin a crooning song to divert her mind from Dolly's deviltry. This was precisely what Dolly desired to effect; her object was two-fold, first, she enjoyed the enemy's discomforture, secondly, she wished to avert the watchful eyes of that enemy from her own actions.

When the two men dumped the woman down on the floor, one of them, Prichett, took from his pocket a small scarlet woolen shawl and threw it on the woman's shoulders. Dolly's eyes delighted in scarlet, and her soul coveted the shawl and from the first she had began to devise schemes to secure it. The eyes of the sober Mrs. Flood were the only eyes, near by, in a condition to heed what occured. So the instant Dolly saw the Flood's eyes turned to the wall, she whirled herself like a te-to-tum up to the

senseless woman's side, dived her lean arm down, seized the shawl, thrust it in her pocket, darted a glance around to see if any one noticed and, relieved on that point, dropped down to rest after her exerions; a feeling of benign and pious satisfaction warmed her teart. She drew up her knees, clasped them in her arms and began to gently sway herself back and forth, at the same time softly swinging with a low and melancholy cadence one of the old plantation songs.

DOLLY'S SONG.

De white man comed across de water,
Long time ago.
Oh! den de tears run chasin' arter,
Long time ago.

II.

De white man fotch us to de boat, Long time ago, He gin us all a bran new coat, Long time ago.

III.

He fotch my mam, he fotch my dad, Long time ago, Oh! den de haht grow berry sad, Long time ago.

IV.

He fotch de son, he fotch de darter, Long time ago, An' den we comed across de water, Long time ago.

The "long time ago" became the mournfulest wail and added melancholy to the already melancholy scene. The song ended, Dolly's head began to droop and nod; for a time she resisted the inclination to sleep, jerking herself up and staring about, indignantly ready to repel any insinuation that she had fallen into the land of Nod. As no one ventured to make such insinuation—her enemy was slyly watching from the corner of her eye but took good care not to be caught—she would again succumb to the god of sleep, down would go the turbaned head, lower, lower, until at last the equilibrium was lost and the whole body followed the head and Dolly tumbled to the floor, plump on the prostrate form of the woman. Picking herself up she rubbed her head, replaced her turban and stared around with intense indignation; finding herself not insulted by any observing eye, she quickly regained her serenity. For the first time her eyes rested on the face of the senseless woman, by whose side she was squatted; a startled and puzzled look came into them as if she were trying to remember where she had seen and known that face. With a tender touch she lifted a tress of the long fair hair and bent her straining eyes upon it. After a long and anxious look a painful astonishment broke over her black face.

"It's my po' honey—sho!" she murmured in tones of distress-

ful pity, "Ef it ain't my po' honey! How did she come to dis—how on yearth did she come to dis? an' her pa so rich, wid his kerrige an' his hosses an' fine house. How eber did she come to

dis yer straight? My po', po' honey?"

The Irish woman had not for a moment lost sight of her enemy's movements. When she saw that the negress recognized the insensible woman she jumped to the conclusion that this was a specimen of the "grand white folks" Dolly had so often boasted of as her friends and home people. Mrs. Flood felt great scorn and contempt for these friends and slyly chuckled over the thought that Dolly's grand white friends should turn out to be drunken creatures brought in from the streets. The door of the lockup was again opened and another specimen of the gentler sex was brought in from the freezing streets. This last arrival was dropped on a bench where she sat blinking stupidly at the dull lamp that hung from the center of the ceiling; pretty soon the warmth of the room and the gin she had swallowed overcame her, her eyes closed and she also began to drop off into the land of Nod. Not able to maintain herself in that unstable domain she fell over and rolled to the floor on the long spread out hair of the woman whom Dolly called her "po" honey." Like a mad tigress the negress jnmped up and seized the offending party, her claw-like fingers clutching the coarse black hair, she tugged to get her away.

"Don't you see "screamed the negress as the drunken woman lay and stupidly blinked at her, "don't you see, you po' low-flung Arish trash! as you is makin yo se'f ontily too free wid yo betters? Dis is a bawn lady, dis is! tech her ag'in ef you dars!"

After getting the poor wretch away Dolly stood, triumphant and victorious, guard over the "bawn lady" her little eyes darting flames at the "Arish trash" which lay and blinked in happy insensibility. Mrs. Flood witnessed the scene and took heed of the epithet "born lady." The desire to taunt her enemy got the better of her discretion.

"Born leddy!" she said, with high scorn, "so thims the leddies nagers brags about, eh? drunken drabs from the gutters, eh?"

As a war steed starts at the sound of the trumpet, as a hound jumps to the inspiring music of the hunter's horn so started Dolly at her enemy's voice. With one bound she stood before her,

every feature alive with rage.

"Hi! yi! hi! yi!" she hissed between her clenched teeth, while her little viperish eyes, so instinct with venom, had they darted from their sockets in the form of fanged serpents the terrified Irish woman would hardly have been surprised. "Hi! yi! hi! yi! yer wants lizards an scorpins tu creep fru de meat o yo legs an arms, eh? eh? and cat'pillars ter creep fru yer marrer bones an up 'long yer back? eh? an rats an mice to make der nestes in yo stomick an ter breed der chilluns dar an set 'em all ter nibblin at yo innards eh? is dat wot you wants? eh? an tree toads to hop roun in dar, an beetle bugs an bumble bees? eh? an ole Satan hisse'f to come at you in de dead o de night

wid his tail a switchin' 'roun' 'mong de cheers, de pots an' de pans a tarrin' de har' o' yo' head out by de roots an' spittin, brimstone fier in yo' eyes? eh? is dat wot you wants? Werry well; dats wot you'll git fus you knows! eh? eh?"

Again the white face turned to the wall and shut its eyes, and Dolly again victorious returned to the born lady, by whose side she sat all through that dismal night, until the dawn of the dis-

mal day. There was no sign of returning consciousness.

"She mus' a' tuck somefin 'sides whisky," said Dolly to herself, gazing anxiously in the woman's face. "She sholy mus a'

tuck somefin, or she'd a come to hersef 'fore now."

Dolly grew anxious. She knew that at ten o'clock she and Mrs. Flood would be taken before a magistrate, possibly a fine would be imposed, in default of the fine she would be sent to the house of correction. This prospect did not suit Dolly. She was intensely anxious to remain with the woman and see her out of her trouble. She tried to arouse her; she rubbed her hands, her face, gently pounded her in the back, and called to her in affectionate terms to "wake up, wake up and see her poor nig." Not succeeding in rousing the sleeper, Dolly began to scheme to remain with her, looking about in search of a hiding place. If she could only stow her slim black body away so as not to be seen when the others were called out, she would be left with the born lady. She walked slowly around the room, looking thoughtfully at the benches, there being no other furniture. The idea of stretching herself straight out under one of the benches in the darkest part of the large room occurred to her, but she gave it up, seeing how easily she would be discovered, and thinking how her enemy would jeer at her failure.

At ten o'clock the key rattled in the lock, and the door swung open on the inside The miserable women all made a rush toward the door as if freedom for them lay beyond it. They jammed and pushed and elbowed each other in their efforts to be the first. Dolly was among them, close followed by the large Mrs. Flood, whose courage returned with day-light, and the prospect of release. She pushed Dolly aside, and got ahead by the force of bulk and strength. When Dolly was pushed on one side, she found herself against the door. A brilliant strategy darted into her little brain. She slipped her slim body behind the door, and the crowd of wretched women moved on and out. Dolly stood

still and held her breath.

"Any more of ye?" sang out the man at the door, putting his head in and looking about. Seeing no one but the woman on the floor, he went up to her, pushed her with his foot, and guessed she'd do for next day; then he went out and locked the door after him. Dolly stood still until the sound of the departing feet died out, then she sprung forward, jumped up and hit her heels together in an ecstasy of triumph.

"I's got de inside track on you dis time!" she said, sobering down a little, "an' I's got de inside track on dat po' Arish trash

of a groc'y 'oman. When she rolls her glum eyes, when she gets afo' de magistrate, an' no Dolly dar, wont she wonder if de debil hissef is come to help Dolly out? Lor'! Lor'!'

Put into quite a comfortable frame of mind by these pleasant reflections, Dolly curled herself up in a ball close by the side of the sleeping woman and delivered herself up to the arms of Morpheus.

CHAPTER II.

THE FINISHER INSTITUTE.

On the evening of the same day that saw Dolly asleep in the lockup, the mistress of that fashionable finishing school for young ladies, arrayed in her most fashionable robes, with her three assistant teachers by her side, also in their most fashionable robes, went down the hall stairway, and sailed into the parlor; (all the chairs and stools and sofas of which also were out in their best attire,) and took their stand at the head of the room, for it was receiving day. Receiving day was a grand day; it came once a month. The ceremonies were imposing and improving. First of all, every one in the institute had to put on her best bib and tucker, then the three lady teachers, led by the mistress of the house, took their stand in the parlor, and received the young ladies as they were announced by Kitty, the red-cheeked chambermaid, who played the part of grand chamberlain. After the teachers had received one or two young ladies, they, the teachers, retired to a sofa and sat in grand state, twogirls being deputed to play the part of hostess, and receive ten or twelve other girls who played the part of visitors; then the lady hostesses were relieved by other two, appointed to play hostesses, and so it went on until the whole school had been received.

Mrs. Finisher possessed one of those elegant frames on which silks, satins and velvets were displayed to great advantage. The bony part of her system rather out did the fleshy; wrists, cheeks, neck and teeth gave one the impression that bone composed the largest part of her being. Two of the assistant teachers were sisters, the Misses Stiggens, little demure old maids, looking for all the world like twins. Both wore spectacles for shortness of sight; both reminded one of brown leaves in autumn; both metaphorically speaking were always in a state of prostration before the elegance and airs of the lady of the institute; both kept their lips firmly puckered up as if afraid some word might imprudently make its escape. Miss Scott, the third teacher, was short, fat and wheezy. Miss Charlmonte had once remarked that she always felt uneasy lest Miss Scott should some day burst through.

her corset and overflow the room.

"Miss Roma Charlmonte," sang out the cheerful Kitty, as a tall slender girl, with dark eyes and complexion entered the Advancing toward the four teachers, she swept a courtesy which Mrs. Finisher was pleased to compliment as a happy blending of grace and dignity.

The drawback to the worth of this compliment lay in the fact, as one of the school girls had long ago discovered, that Miss Charlemonte was an heiress, and of course everything she did was

pretty and proper...

"Miss Constance Ashford" was the next announcement. beauty of this girl was remarkable. The lily was no fairer; her eyes were violet in color, tender in expression; her hair bright and abundant. She also swept a pretty courtesy which well pleased her instructress.

It now became the duty of these two young ladies to play The four teachers betook themselves to the sofa to ob-The two young ladies took their serve, criticise and correct.

places at the head of the room.

"Miss Teresa Olivia Wedrington," sang out Kitty in a loud Miss Wedrington stepped up with a stately dignity. She was an American Senator's only daughter, consequently felt that she belonged to a superior class. It is well understood in this so-called Republic that any political office bestows a sort of patent of nobility on the fortunate possessor. Office holders rank ordinary mortals.

Mrs. Finisher was not satisfied with Miss Wedrington's man-

ner. She rose to show how it should be done.

"A little too stiff, my dear," she said, "dignity becomes your style, yet a trifle less would better become your years. Please

observe and imitate me."

So saying, Mrs. Finisher sailed to the door. Kitty called out: "Mrs. Finisher, of the Finisher Institute." Mrs. Finisher sailed up, in a stately, yet juvenile manner, swept a courtesy, showed all her teeth, and resumed her seat with a satisfied conscience, and watched Miss Wedrington's second effort.

"That is better," exhibiting all her gleaming teeth.

much better. That is very much better indeed."

Miss Wedrington passed on to the rear and stood disdainfully

looking at the others as they came in one by one.

"Miss Rosa Amelia Bickford," was the next announcement. Miss Rosa Amelia was a pretty little pink and white creature, who had a pretty habit of blushing and casting down her lids, as if a lover were fixing upon her his impassioned eyes. Roseate

and sweet she dropped her pretty courtesy and passed on.
"Miss Melissa Mopson," was the next in order. Miss Mopson was a sad-eyed young lady, with a little pug nose set in the middle of a little pug face. She was very sentimental, devoured romances in secret, and cried over the woes of the "Children of the Abbey," "Charlotte Temple," "Alonza and Melissa," etc., the latter heroine she had been named after. Mrs. Finisher was by no means pleased with Miss Mopson's courtesy.

"A little more animation, if you please," she said, with severe dignity. "If I am not mistaken, Miss Mopson, you merited and received the same reproof at our last reception. I must beg you, Miss Mopson, to practice a little more cheerfulness. society, as your aunt will tell you, Miss Mopson, should sedulously avoid the tomb-stone style. You will be so good, Miss Mopson, as to do it again, and put on a little more cheerfulness, if you please."

Miss Mopson burst into tears, she was wounded in the ten-

derest spot. Of course she was ordered to her room.

"Miss Sophia Smidge" was Kitty's next announcement, at the same time giving a shove forward with her red, stumpy hand to a giggling young lady who held one hand over her mouth as if afraid her teeth would jump out. Miss Smidge advanced with a bound and a jump, bobbed down and bobbed up and then clapped both hands over her mouth and gurgled and giggled with the highest enjoyment. Mrs. Finisher's face grew dark.

"Miss. Smidge" she said, with icy dignity, "be so good as to remember that the drawing room is not the place for animal performances. This Institute proposes to finish off young ladies of the highest families in the land; not to train wild animals. Scott be so good as to show Miss Smidge how to enter a room and greet her hostess."

It there was anything painful to Miss Scott it was the exercise required of her; she was fat, short and wheezy, graceful bends were out of the question, yet she went through the performance with scrupulous care and painstaking duty and emerged panting and red in the face. Miss Smidge was ordered to imitate her preceptress but was so overcome with giggles and gurgles that she was sternly ordered to her room to practice before the glass for one hour. Miss Smidge, head tucked down, both hands to her mouth to hold in the irrepressible gurgles and giggles, scampered out off the room in a very convulsion of mirth. Mrs. Finisher's sense of dignity was still further outraged by explosive sounds of laughter that came from the hall as the young lady scampered through it.

The ceremony of reception over, the ladies rested from their labor, chatted together with stately formality until the tea bell rung, then the whole bevy trooped out and down the stairway which led to the supper room, and such a twittering and fluttering and whispering and chattering as began, after the formalities of the affair were over, was never before heard outside of a school room. School discipline was suspended for one week, every girl plumed her wings in gay expectancy of freedom for seven days—seven days no figures to dull their young eyes, no piano keys to tire

their young fingers, no recitations to dread.

In the midst of the buzzing at the tea table the lady at the head of the table gave several sharp raps to silence the noises. one of the sixty-four young eyes were turned upon her.

"At-ten-TION! young ladies!"

A dead silence fell on the house. Then Mrs. Finisher informed them that certain boxes, the contents of which were unknown to her, had arrived for certain young ladies and she would proceed and read out the names of the fortunate girls.

The buzz and chatter was greater than ever.

"I shall think my mama very mean if she has not sent me a box, "said Miss Rosa Amelia, with a pretty little pout. She had been notified that she would not be neglected.

"My papa in the Senate has no time to think of boxes," said Miss Wedrington, with great disdain. Miss Wedrington had no

hope of being remembered.

Miss Smidge said she did'nt look for any goodies, she expected to go home for her goodies. Mrs. Finisher held a slip of paper in her hand and read out the names of the receivers. Among them were the names of Miss Charlemonte and Miss Ashford. When the list was ended, the cousins held a whispering conference, and then Miss Charlomonte asked permission to speak. She wished to invite the girls of their class to come and eat of the good things in their box on the next evening, as some of the girls expected to leave the institute the day after. Permission was given and the class invited on the spot. Then there was a buzz and a flutter as of a flock of birds, and the young girls ran or scampered or glided up stairs to their own rooms.

CHAPTER III.

THE YOUNG LAWYER—"A SPEECH AS IS A SPEECH."

It was past twelve o'clock when Dolly awoke. She rubbed her eyes and looked about a little confused, but pretty soon her senses returning, she stared around in search of the woman by whose side she had gone to sleep. In the furthest corner of the room, her head propped up between her two hands, elbows on her knees, sat the object of her anxiety.

Dolly went up and laid a hand on her shoulder.

"Is you feelin' any better, Miss Silla?" she asked, in that

coaxing tone negroes use with children they love.

The woman looked up, but not immediately recognizing the negress, dropped her eyes and made no answer. Dolly was shocked. That she was not recognized, struck her as a very dangerous symptom.

"Lor'! Lor'!" she groaned, dropping down on the bench by the woman's side. "What hev come to de po' chile! What on

yearth have come to her?"

Then she made another effort.

"Don't you members Dolly, Miss Silla? Dolly, as usent ter comb yo' pretty h'ar? Dolly as went home wid yo' ma from de White Suffer Springs o' ole Firginny? Lor'! I knowed you,

Miss Silla, de fust minute I lay eyes on yo' pretty ha'r. holes your own monses well, honey, you do, dough you is sorter growed up sence I lived wid you' ma. You was a slim

slip of a gal den."

This last was intended as a delicate compliment. Dolly was in truth much shocked by the great and disagreeable change that had come over her old acquaintance. The coarsened skin, the bloated face, the troubled eyes, all told too plainly of the bad life the woman had lived. Even while telling the kind-hearted story, the tears of pity trickled from the negress' eyes. The white woman had gone too far for tears. There comes a time in the life of wrecked women, when, should they weep, not water, but molten lead would flow, such at least was the thought of the white woman as she looked at the black's ready drops.

"Don't you members me, Miss Silla?" again asked the negress

with pathetic anxiety.

The woman admitted she did by a nod of her head—this en-

couraged Dolly.

"I's dat sorry for to see yo' in dis yer fix, Miss Silla, der ain't nuffin as ole Dolly wouldn' do for ter git yo' outen dis low down hole."

She waited for some word in reply, none came and she re-

"Miss Silla, honey, tell me dis, jes tell me dis, wot's come o' yo' ma an' yo' pa? an' de fine house dey used to lib in, an' all de silks an satins suit'ble for bawn ladies as yo is, honey?"

The woman lifted her eyes, a dull wretchedness in them. "Don't," she murmured, "I can't bear to hear of all that. thousand years lie between me and all that."

Then, after a pause, in a more quiet tone, she said, "There is no lady here, Dolly—all that has gone—there is no

lady, unless it be you, Dolly."

"Lor', honey,', returned the negress, beginning to be afraid her companion's mind was upset, for she did not exactly understand her meaning, "You's on'y pokin' fun at dis po' nig; you is de sho-nuff-reg'lar-bawn lady of dis Nawven country, same as Miss Roma Charmon and Miss Carry Ashfud is de sho-nuff-reg'lar-bawn lady of ole Souf Callina, an' dis chile is nuffin mo' 'n a po' nigger wid white folks-fus' quality folks' ways-dat's de

way hit is, Miss Silla." To this pleasing little essay her companion made no response, before it was concluded she had dropped back in her sunken and dejected attitude. Dolly availing herself of the opoprtunity to take note of the white woman's apparel, the disreputable condition of which caused Dolly much distress of mind. The dress was of silk, but was fearfully abused, the skirts were draggled and torn, the shoes worn and muddy, the head bonnetless, and the hair disordered. To be bareheaded upon the street Dolly looked upon as an unpardonable breach of propriety. She at once threw the blame on the policemen.

"Dem dar oudacious p'licemen mus' a stole Miss Silla's bonnet," she muttered to herself. "I knows dey did, Miss Silla neber comed out on de street widout no bonnet on her head."

A long silence ensued which was at length broken by the

"Was you took up, honey, for bein' -a little floored, eh?"

"Floored" Dolly thought a more delicate word than drunk, and less wounding to the pride, but her companion had long since past all pride.

"No," she replied with a groan, "No, it was not whiskey,

Dolly, it was laudanum this time."

"Lau-num!" cried the ready black. "Lor', honey, I knowed it want whiskey (Yet, until that instant she had believed that whiskey was at the bottom of her trouble). Didn' I tell that good-for-nothing p'liceman as I knowed it wa'nt whiskey, nor yet gin, nor brandy? I said from de fus' go as it war launum for to kill de pains ob toof ache. Lor', I knowed dat."

"No, no, It was not the pain of a toothache, it was the pain of

life—the pain of life, I wanted to kill."

Although Dolly did not exactly comprehend the meaning of this anguished moan, she caught at the idea that laudanum, and not whiskey, had been drunk. She knew that to take by accident an over dose of laudanum was a lighter offense than taking an over dose of whiskey. She saw in the laudanum a plea for freedom.

"Dar won't be no trouble den, honey," she said cheerfully, "bout gittin' yo outen dis low-down place, der ain't no law for to jek a ooman up for takin' a little lau'uum when she's got de toof ache, don't you be no ways oneasy, Miss Silla, you'll pull fro all right, sho "

Dolly's affectionate interest so far gained on the white woman as to draw from her a few questions concerning Dolly's own affairs. For what had she been taken up and how long did she

expect to stay in?

"De good Lawd on'y knows, Miss Silla," replied Dolly, in an injured tone, yet inwardly delighted at diverting the white woman's thoughts even for a moment, from her own troubles. "De good Lawd on'y knows how long dem oudacious p'licemen gwine ter keep me yer, and de Lawd hisself knows der wa'nt no 'casion for ter jek me up an' fotch me yer in de fus place, but dem oudacious p'licemen, dey gwine do jes as much meanness as dey kin do, dey hain't got no mo' conscience dan a yellow suckegg dog, dey ain't dat."

"Have you money, Dolly, to help you out?" asked the white

Dolly broke out into a jovial grin.

"Nary red cent, Miss Silla, I's plum busted up sho! You members how hit used to was, honey? Well, hit's jes dat same way now. Mars Ed'rd, he gins me my qua'tly 'lowance reglar jes de same, an' I gits fro wid it jes the same, fo' de time comes roun' for de nex' paymen', so you see, honey, how hit is, sometimes I has lots o' money, den agin I haint nary red, an'

dats de way now."

Then the white woman drew from some secret recess in her garments, a small parcel tied in paper, unfolding this, two small articles of jewelry were exposed, one was a ring with a stone in it, the other was a small medallion set with small pearls. Dolly's eyes glistened, she knew the value of diamonds and received the ring with a radiant face.

"Lor', honey!" she cried, "dis'll fetch 'em-dis'll fetch 'em,

sho!"

Stationing herself at the door, the upper part of which was grated, she hailed the first passer-by, made known that she wanted a lawyer sent to her, and in the course of half an hour she had the satisfaction of receiving a card through the bars of

the prison, presented by a young man on the other side.

"Blackstone Coke Sharpe, Attorney at Law," was the information the card was intended to convey, but did not to Dolly, as she did not know how to read. She twirled the pasteboard in her hand and bent her little black, dancing eyes on the face across the iron bars. It was a broad, coarse-featured face, with bold, merry black eyes and the largest sized mouth. A shock of long and coarse black hair stood upon his head.

Is you de lawyer we sent for!" asked Dolly rather dubiously. It struck her that the individual before her was not old enough

to be very "high up in de law."

The young man said he was; he was the sort of a lawyer that got people out of bad scrapes, and he was ready to get her out of a bad scrape if she was ready with the fee, the wheels of law never turned unless greased by silver or gold.

Dolly resented this and mounted her high horse of dignity.

"You takes us for po' white folks?" she cried indignantly. "We ain't none o' yo' trundle-bed trash, I tell you we ain't, an' we don't want none o' yo' trundle-bed-trash-law nuther—we wants fust-quality law—fust-quality law, fust-quality pay—dat's

de kind o' ha'r pins we is."

The young man's bold, black eyes laughed goodnaturedly as he said something to appease the black's anger, after which they came to an amicable understanding. Dolly explained the laudanum business on the hypothesis of the toothache, declaring that the white lady was the "berry fust in de lan", de berry fust." She gave him the ring and told him to convert it into money and take his fee out of it, and be sure and buy Miss Silla a bonnet, as "dem dah onconscionable p'licemen had stealed Miss Silla's bonnet, else lef' it in de street, too mean an' lazy to pick it up.

Preliminaries settled the young lawyer departed with the ring,

highly elated at the prospect of a fee.

Blackstone Coke Sharpe, the son of Solomon Sharpe, Esq., of Canaan Four Corners, was looked upon as a very promising

young lawyer, he himself indulged dreams of the Presidential chair, and only waited to get his foot planted on the first rung of the ladder reaching up to fame. after which he had not the slightest doubt but that he would continue to climb until he got to the topmost round. Why shouldn't he well as another? Every American boy is stimulated to aim at the Presidency, is told as soon as he gets into his first breeches, that the White House is open to his ambition, perhaps this has something to do with the army of office seekers that overrun the

Another night came on, another batch of miserable female mortality moaned, and groaned, and snored, and broke into drunken sobs, and swore drunken oaths, as on the first night, but Dolly was not so forlorn as on the first. She and the white woman sat together and gave each other such poor comfort as

they could.

"Is dis yo's?" asked the negress, drawing the little shawl from her pocket.

The white woman said it was.

"Zackly what I 'spicioned," said Dolly complacently. "De fus' minit I sot eyes on dat shawl I s'picioned as how it was yo' shawl, becase I seed dat ar po' Arish ooman pick it up from whar you was layin' so soun' sleep, an' I jes snatch it outen her han' becase I 'spicioned it was yo's."

Dolly carefully pinned the shawl around her companion's shoulders and followed the crowd to the magistrate's office. As they went in Dolly saw the young lawyer coming up side by side with his old friend, Mr. Huntitem, the rising young journalist. Sharp and Huntitem both tried to pierce through the thick brown veil which covered the white woman's face. Sharp brought an armful of law books and placed them with imposing dignity on the table in full view of the "Court" and the people. The white and the black woman were given seats, the young lawyer sat down by the side of the former and wanted to talk over the case.

"We must plant ourselves on the proud pinnacle of perfect and injured innocence," said the young man in a low tone, his bold black eyes vainly trying to pierce through the veil to the features it concealed. "We must stand as a stone statue on the pedestal

of purity—which will fetch us out all right."

It may be noticed that the strong feature of Mr. Sharp's oratory was his rich and liberal use of alliteration, of which, however, at that moment his white client had not the proper appreciation. She made no answer, only bowed her head. Dolly

made amends. Dolly was generous in praise.

"Dat's it, Mr. Lawyer," she said, nodding her turbaned head as she reached around the white woman to get a good view of the young promising. "Dat's de way to fetch 'em. Miss Silly's jes as innocent as ary sucking dove you eber see in all yo' bawn days. Ain't I knowed Miss Silla sence she wa'nt no more'n so high? (holding her hand about three feet from the floor) You hits de nail on de head when you comes to dat ar in'scence, you does for a fac."

"If they don't mind," said the young lawyer, knitting his brows with an air of stern and desperate resolve, "if they don't take most particular good care, I'll cross the Rubicon, I'll carry the war into Africa—I'll arraign the higher powers, I'll put the government of this city on the defensive—damages, my dear madam, damages for unlawful imprisonment, eh? Huntitem, won't that fetch 'em."

Huntitem stopped sucking the stump of an unlighted cigar long enough to signify that he thought that would make things howl.

The first case was Dick Dodgers, poor old Dick Dodgers, found drunk on the street, fined a V. There he stood a miserable mockery of a man, shaky in the knees, blear-eyed, dirty, ragged, he was an old, old offender, on an average, up once or twice a month. For the last twenty years he had never been known to do a hand's turn at any sort of work, he was fed and housed and clothed by his daughter, an over-worked needle woman, who from daylight until dark and on until midnight by the light of a tallow candle stitched and stitched to keep herself and him in bread. How did this miserable creature get the stuff to make himself drunk? This was a question his drudging daughter had asked a hundred times. She never gave him a cent; he never worked for a cent, yet the fact remained that he managed in some way to get the whiskey or the gin and get drunk, almost every day, and if his daughter could not manage to get hold of him in time, his drunk generally cost her all the dimes she could earn and save up in two months. She paid the fine and went out, the

shaky old thing staggering after her.

The next case was Mr. Gaff's, charged with wife-beating. Mr. Gaff was a fair specimen of the average American sovereign after he has started on the downward road to ruin, and has not got quite so far as old Dodger. Gaff was a harness-maker by trade, a good workman when sober, but the sober spells grew fewer and shorter and the drunken spells longer and more frequent; he was a big, brawny fellow with a broad drink-inflamed face and an angry eye. Stimulants went straight to his combative bumps and set them to kicking up rows, especially in his own house. His wife was a hard-working woman, but she often lost patience and talked and scolded when her husband came home drunk and penniless, and so too often stirred him up to blows. Mrs. Gaff never complained of her husband, on the contrary, she always tried to shield him from the law's punishment. The only witness against Gaff, was a little sharp-eyed sewing woman, who looked almost as sharp as one of her own needles. She testified that just about dark she had heard somebody stumbling up the stairs. She looked out and saw Gaff, he went in where his wife was. Mrs. Gaff had just come home from a day's washing, had earned fifty cents, spent twenty-five for the family supper, and had

twenty-five left. Gaff wanted this silver quarter to buy drink, his wife refused, he cursed her and swore he would have it. A struggle ensued, Mrs. Gaff put the money in her mouth, then Gaff beat and choked her to make her give it up. At this point the little needle woman called a policeman.

"You needn't be giving me any of your grumpish looks, Jimmy Gaff," said the little needle woman, catching the ill-tempered gaze fixed upon her. "I ain't your wife, thank heaven! You

can't beat me, Jimmy Gaff."

"She's a liar," roared Gaff, purple with rage and drink, "she's

a lying mischief-making jade, as my wife knows."

Mrs. Gaff was called and testified that she and her man sometimes had words, he was a little cross when in liquor, she hoped his honor would not be hard upon him.

The woman's eyes were bunged and her cheeks bruised black and blue by her husband's effort to tear the money from her

mouth.

Old Dick Dodger and Jimmy Gaff both belonged to that grand sex which calls itself the "protectors" of the weaker. Gaff was let off with a reprimand. He walked out in high feather, casting a devilish look of triumph on the little sharp needle woman. Mr. Huntitem made a pathetic paragraph for the columns of the paper he represented, showing woman's beautiful devotion to her "protector," even though choked and bunged and generally raked over the coals by him.

"Devotion? Fiddlesticks!" was the disrespectful comment of

"Devotion? Fiddlesticks!" was the disrespectful comment of the little needle woman. "It's no more devotion than it's the cat's foot! It's skeer, downright skeer. She's afeerd her master'll use her rougher'n ever when he gits out—that's the sort of devotion that makes Mrs. Gaff lie to keep the blackguard

out o' prison."

The three little Gaff children, clinging to their mother's skirts trotted out with the devoted pair and went back to their drink-ruined home.

The case of the white woman was called—name unknown. "What's the charge?" asked the tired looking magistrate.

"Drunk on the street," said Mr. Hagan, after first relieving his mouth of its cargo of tobacco juice.

Mr. Blackstone Coke Sharpe sprang to his feet, his bold black

eyes flashed fire.

"I except to that, your honor!" he yelled out, with the lungs of a bull, at the same time glaring fiercely at the astonished policeman. The sleepy old court waked itself up and pricked

up its ears.

"May it please your honor," continued the young lawyer, pushing up to the front and laying his right hand on one of the open law books he had brought, "may it please your honoe there has been a great, a grievous, a grand and awful mistaken I will not now point out the guilty man, I will not stop to expose his base and selfish purposes, I will only assert in the face of

scandal and falsehood(glaring savagely at Hagan)that my fair client, one of the most refined and elegant ladies of this or of any other city, has never sinned against the laws of man or God, I say, your honor, my client has been wilfully and falsely, maliciously and feloniously accused of, great heavens—drunkenness! What are the facts? I ask your honor to look at the facts! Sir, with pride, with great and commendable pride, I point to my client—one of the first ladies in the land. I am honored with her confidence—proud that she reposes confidence in my strong arm to defend her from the malicious aspirations of her foesher foes did I say? The foes of all womanhood. What man with the feelings of manhood in his breast, will not interpose his shield in her defence? will not raise his arm and his voice in her defence? Your honor, we are prepared to prove, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that my fair client is not only stainless as the snow on the mountain peak, is utterly innocent of this vile charge, but that she does not and never has known the taste of that which stealeth away the brains of man, that charge, sir trumped up by a reckless offical, to hide his own negligence (a withering look at Hagan)—negligence in not sending for the proper medical authorities to treat a case of overdose of laudanum, swallowed in haste under the agony of an excrutiating toothache. This, sir, is the sum of her offence—this and nothing more, for this her fair name is tarnished by slanderous inventions, (another glance at the dumbfounded Hagan).

> "'Who steals my purse, steals trash, But the man who filches me of my good name,

Is twenty times a thief. I appeal to your honor for justice justice, though the heavens fall! I appeal to a generous American public (great applause, even the poor wretches waiting their trials, felt themselves part of the American public and joined in the applause) I say to this large-hearted American public (more applause) Justice! Justice! (here a sudden letting down of the arms and voice of the young orator.) Your honor, I ask that my fair client be honorably acquitted."

The magistrate was puzzled—this sudden and stentorian outburst had waked him up—he looked inquiringly at Mr. Hagan, whose face was gloomy and grum enough, he could not understand, and begun to fear he had arrested some lady of good

family.

"I thought the lady was drunk," he growled, in self defence. "You thought!" thundered the young orator, turning on the unfortunate policeman with overwhelming power, his bold,

black eyes gleaming wrathfully. "You thought. Your honor I except to that; I claim the protection of this court for my fair client; I appeal to Your Honor in behalf of my fair client. Has that man (pointing the finger of scorn at the wretched Hagan) that man the right to think away the character of a refined, noble, elegant lady of this or any

other city? Your Honor I claim the right to cross question this swift witness."

"Certainly, if you wish," said the confused magistrate, "Come forward, Mr. Hagan, and state what you know."

The unfortunate policeman slunk up looking very like a whipped yet angry bear, he now felt certain that he had arrested some woman of a rich and influential family. The young lawyer glared at him in a way to increase his fears and confuse his ideas.

"Be so good, sir, first of all, to inform the court what your name is—your real name? No aliases will do here, let me tell

We want your true name and no other."

This was put in such a way as to create the impression on every mind that the policeman had been sailing under false colors, and had about a dozen aliases on hand, which so confused and enraged poor Hagan he could not speak; he stuttered indistinctly, and stared guiltily. Taking advantage of this, the young lawyer smiled a wicked smile at the by-standers, as much as to say, 'said: "You see how I've caught him!" and with dark sternness,

"No subterfuge, sir! no evasion! We want your name—the true name you got from your father, if you hav'nt forgot it. Speak out, sir! this court has no time to wait. Your name, sir!"

"Bill Hagan! and be damned to you!" blurted out the badgered "Every fool in this officer, growing apoplectic in the face.

world knows my name."

"Hagan! Very well, sir; Hagan let it be. Never mind what the fools know, this court, sir, wants as little to do with fools as possible."

Mr. Hagan eyed the young lawyer like an angry bear, tethered

to a post which he knew he could not leave.

"Now, Mr. Hagan," began the young attorney, turning back his sleeve cuffs, as if getting ready for the tug of war, "are you prepared to testify on oath that my client was drunk when she fell fainting on the street, while returning from the doctor's office, to which she had gone to have a tooth extracted? Yes or no? Speak out, sir! Yes or no! Remember the penalty for perjury on oath, sir. Drunk was she?"

Hagan wanted to explain. He was cut short.

"No dodging," cried the lawyer fiercely, eyeing the witness. "Face it like a man. Can you swear the lady was drunk?" Dodging wont do here, Mr. Hagan; this court demands a categorical answer. Will you kiss the bible and swear that my fair client had not fainted from pain? Yes or no, Mr. Hagan? Answer on your conscience as to your God, Mr. Hagan. you swear?"

"I'll be d-d if I do," blurted out the enraged Hagan.

"That will do, sir; your honor, that is sufficient. This swift witness now admits, confesses and acknowledges that if he sticks to that false charge against my fair client, he will be damned. That is exactly my opinion. I hope your honor will order the the honorable discharge of the lady."

His honor did and the young man sat down amid thunders of

applause.

The white woman was told she was free. Dolly clung to her

side: the two made their way out of the court.

Mr. Blackstone Coke Sharp's friends warmly shook him by the hand and congratulated him on his great effort. Mr. Huntitem told him he had now got his feet on the first round of the ladder, going up to fame and fortune; he would climb on to the topmost round.

"You'll get on, my boy," said Holdfast, one of the oldest members of the bar. "You're bound to get on; you've got the push and you've got the brass in you."

Hagan still looking like a tied and angry bear stood by gloomily chewing and spitting-tobacco was his only resource.

The young lawyer's bold and now merry black eyes lighted on

that disgruntled officer.

"Why hello Hagan, old fellow!" he cried, slapping him on the shoulder in the friendliest way, "here's every body congratulating me except you. How did you like my speech? Pretty good, eh?"

Mr. Hagan was profane. He wanted to know how the h- a man could like a speech that came down on him like a thousand

of bricks."

"All's fair in love and war, Hagan, eh? I was bound to win my case. You stood in the way; I had to bowl you out. Who is the woman, anyway?"

"How the d-l should I know?" growled the policeman, not

in the least molified. "I thought you knowed."

"Not a word—not a word!" cried Blackstone Coke Sharp with a radiant face. "Never heard a word; don't know her family, don't know her name. never saw her face and never heard her speak. She may be deaf and dumb and blind for aught I know."

"And dead drunk too, I suppose?" growled Hagan, glowering

with rage.

"Exactly. For all I know a woman of the town. Good-day,

Hagan."

The policeman was speechless with rage. Badgered in open court for a woman of the town. Words were inadequate to express his indignation.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHRISTMAS BOX.

The two young ladies left the tea table on the night they were to feast their companions on the good things in the Christmas box, and went up to their own room, to make ready for their

guests, which Miss Charlmonte at once proceeded to do. She replenished the fire, cleared the two tables of books, paper, pens and ink bottles, drew them together in the middle of the room and spread over them a snow white cloth. Pat, the porter, brought in the box which was large and heavy, and prized off the top.

The other girl paid no attention. She had dropped into a seat near the window, pulled aside the curtain, and fixing her lonely violet eyes on the clouded sky beyond, she fell into dreams and

said nothing.

Miss Charlmonte sniffed at the box, peered into it, glanced at

the beauty by the window.

"We won't unpack the box until the girls come," said Miss Charlmonte.

"Don't you think they will like to see the things taken out; to

help?"

"I dare say, yes." replied the beauty at the window, dreamily, not once withdrawing her lovely eyes from their gaze on the overcast sky without. Her cousin again sniffed at the box.

"It smells like turkey, Canny, and there's the odor of cake and

fruit, oranges and apples; don't you think so, Canny?"
"Don't I think what, dear?" asked Miss Canny, still in dreamland, from which neither turkey or oranges, cake or apples had power to draw her, Miss Charlmonte began to resent this indifference.

"Did'nt I think what?" she retorted in a sharp tone, and then satirically remarked that no matter how fond people might be of astronomical observations, she thought a little common sense would teach them there was no sort of use in studying the heavens when the skies were hid behind black clouds.

The beauty at the window looked at the satirical young lady in amazement, and then sweetly asked if her assistance was

Miss Charlmonte said nothing more could be done until Kitty

brought the plates, knives and forks.

Then there was a long pause, which was broken by a sigh, a little and very gentle sigh; but still a sigh, which came from the gentle breast of the dreamer at the window. Miss Charlmonte's quick ear caught the sound.

"Now, Co ny, dear," she said, "if you really are so hungry for turkey and pickles, like Sophy Smidge, I'll cut you a slice at

once."

The little beauty looked gravely astonished.

"Hungry? Why what on earth, Roma, makes you think I am hungry? Do I look like Sophy Smidge."

"No! O, no!" replied Miss Roma, cheerfully, sitting down in a chair directly in front of the beauty, and looking at her critically. "Conny, dear, there is no personal resemblance—not the least. You are very lovely to look at. Miss Smidge is not exactly what we would call a beauty. Your hair is bright as gold;

Miss Smidge's dull as snuff. Your eyes a deep violet; Miss. Smidge's rather snuffy. Your skin, clear rose and white; Miss Smidge's snuffy. No, there is no personal resemblance between you and Sophy Smidge; but if it is not hunger, Conny, that makes you sigh and groan in that dismal way, pray tell me what it is?"

Now the lovely young beauty certainly felt that she was badly treated; that it was altogether unjust to describe her one little timid sigh as dismal sighs and groans. Groans! In that word lay the grossest unjustice; and to sigh and groan for hunger!

Tears rose to the gentle eyes.

"As if—as if," she sobbed, "I could be such a—such a pig as to sigh and groan for—for turkey! I don't want turkey! I hate turkey! I want mama and papa, and all—all the rest, and—and

they send me-me turkey!"

The word "turkey" came out with such concentrated scorn as made Miss Roma smile in her sleeve and go on with her teasing.

"It is all very well, Conny, dear," she said, with affected seriousness, "for you to turn up your pretty nose at turkey. You may be inspired by thoughts too high and emotions too fine to permit you to feel the every day wants of humbler mortals, but for my part, I quite sympathize with Sophy Smidge to-night, and am perfectly ravenous for baked turkey, and almost mad for pickles. If there is not here in this box an eighteen pound bird, beautifully browned, and stuffed with oysters, after Aunt Rachel's best style, the disappointment will be crushing."

"You may have all my share, Roma," said the beauty, with pathetic sweetness,. "I will not touch it. I-I want mama and

papa and home. Í don't want turkey."

A small square of cambric, edged with lace, was applied to the

tearful eye. Still Miss Roma was obdurate."

"Well, dear," she said in a decisive tone, "I have made up my mind. I shall write to aunt this night, as soon as the girls finish their supper, and tell her just how you feel-how homesick you are. I have been thinking of it some time."

"What—what will you say to mama?" asked the beauty, gently weeping behind the handkerchief.

"What will I say? Well, dear, I have a great deal to say that aunt ought to know. I am afraid she will scold me for not saying it sooner."

"Saying what, Roma?" inquired the other in some anxiety.

"You talk so enigmatical, I do not understand."

"Not at all. There's no enigma about it, Conny. I mean that I ought to have written to aunt and told her how her poor little girl is pining for home, and how she has lost her appetite and does not eat as much as the canary bird she left in its cage at home, and how, instead of growing better, she grows worse. I think, Conny, dear, that your appetite began to fail after that unfortunate sleigh ride we took with Cousin Ed. I blame Ed. for the whole trouble, Conny. He drove so carelessly and spilled

you out in the snow, and you went down almost out of sight. Won't Uncle and Aunt give it to Ed. for his carelessness? that I think a tumble in the white snow such a dangerous thing. If it had been me, it would have made no difference, but youwhy, Conny, Ed. himself was dreadfully alarmed. He turned quite pale, as if you was tumbling down a precipice on ragged rocks. He dashed the reins to me and sprung out in a flash. Perhaps it was fear of what uncle and aunt would say, that frightened him so. When he put you back in the sleigh and tucked the robe around you, didn't you notice, dear, how pale he was?—as if something awful had happened?"

There was no reply, and the young lady resumed: "I noticed from that hour that my poor little coz has not been the same gay and cheerful and hearty little girl. No, dear, you sit about, drooping and dreaming, as if something dreadful was on your mind, and you don't eat enough to keep a bird alive and aunt ought to know it."

During all this cruel speech, Miss Charlmonte was cooly watching the changes that flitted over the lovely face before her. First it flushed, then it paled, then again it flushed, then into the velvet eyes there seemed to gather a look of sorrowful in-

dignation.

"O!" she cried, "what a dreadful, dreadful story! You must not write that to mamma! It will make her uneasy.

can you think of such stories? Oh, Roma!"

"Stories?" echoed the other, with an open, innocent face. "How can you call them stories, Conny, dear? Can you deny that something very, very serious happened to you when you were spilled out on the snow? Can you deny that you have lost your appetite? Can you say on your honor that the sleigh-ride had nothing to do with it? Have I not seen you time and again rise from the table, your meat untasted on your plate?"
"I don't like beef," replied the beauty, earnestly. "I never

could eat beef. Mamma knows I hate beef."

"Were it only beef, my poor little Conny." replied the tormenter, with great seriousness, "I would not think it necessary to write to aunt. But, dear! I know, before that sleigh-ride, you were quite fond of chicken-brown-baked chicken was your delight, Conny,—yet, only yesterday I saw you slip your piece of chicken to the plate of that sallow-skinned cormorant, Sophy Smidge. You can't deny that, Conny, dear?"

"It was tough, Roma. I believe that chicken was as old as

Miss Stokes. Mamma knows I never will eat tough chicken, and besides, Roma, Sophy Smidge whispered to me that she was so hungry, and you know how Mrs. Finisher looks at a girl

when she asks for more chicken."

"At any rate, little coz," returned Miss Charlmonte, reflectively, "I am positive that something serious has been the matter with you ever since Ed. Charlmonte—careless, careless fellow!—turned you out in the snow-bank. Indeed, my darling, I noticed from the very moment Cousin Ed. put you back in the sleigh that a change had taken place—a serious change. You were no longer the gay, lively little girl. You sat as still as a mouse and seemed to be in a dream, and never spoke a word, and as to Cousin Ed, I declare he too, thought something un-commonly serious had happened. He looked so, so guilty. I

think his conscience was stinging him for imperiling your life in that fearful snow-bank. Don't you, Conny, dear?"

A deep blush dyed the beauty's cheeks. She turned to the window to evade the dark eyes of her satirical cousin. How vividly she remembered that ride! Could she ever forget the plunge in the white, soft bank? Could she ever forget the handsome, eager face that looked into her's as she struggled to feet? Could she ever forget the light touch of a pair of young lips laid upon her virgin brow and the two tender words, "Darling! darling!" that broke from the one heart and went straight to the other, and filled and thrilled it with a strange rapture? Never could all this be forgotten. It lived in her memory. It haunted her dreams by day and by night. world to her vision and glorified the universe. It expanded the

As soon as she felt that she could speak with a perfectly steady

voice, she replied, gravely:

"You well know, Roma, that there is nothing the matter with It will be very unkind in you to write that nonsense to mamma."

"Ah, my little coz," replied the other, "you do not realize how serious the case is. However, since you do not wish Aunt to be made uneasy, perhaps it will do as well to consult Cousin Ed. I think Ed. knows enough by this time to be trusted with your case. Besides, I dare say, Ed. will understand your ailment better than any other doctor would, and will take more interest in it, as he is most to blame about it."

This was the feather that broke the camel's back. The beauty Miss Charlmonte smiled a wicked little smile burst into tears. and then became compunctious. Jumping up, she put her arms

around her little cousin.

"Why, what is it, Conny, dear? I never dreamed that you

would care. There!—there!"

With each "there," she set a kiss on the little beauty, first on the top of her head, then on her forehead, then on her tear-wet cheek. The loving heart was easily appeared. Drying her eyes, she smiled at her own weakness.

"I cannot see, Roma, dear," she said, "how you can be so un-

kind, when you know I love you so much,"

"It was mean in me, little coz," said the tall girl, after indulging in another sly smile over the top of her cousin's golden brown head. "It was very, very mean to tease you so; but don't you see, dear, how should I know you really cared? Not a word have you or Ed. ever told me of the great happiness that has come to you, and you know he is my brother by adoption,

and cousin by birth, as you are my sister. Now, was it not

shabby to keep it from me?"

"But you know!—you know!—you know!" murmured the girl, hiding her roseate face on the tall girl's shoulder, and after

that confession, there was loving peace between them.

Kitty came in with the plates, the knives and forks, and along the uncarpeted corridor came the patter of young feet and lively raps at the door, which opened and the young things fluttered in and stood around the fire. But before we go on with the account of the accident, or fate which prevented the bidden guests from enjoying the feast, we must return to Dolly and the born lady. Trifling as the circumstances may be, great results hinged upon them.

CHAPTER V.

PAYING THE PENALTY.

Dolly and the woman she had called the "bawn lady," made their way out of the police court as fast as they could, paying no attention to the many curious glances which endeavored to pierce the folds of the brown veil that covered the white woman's face. Once in the street the white woman rushed on as if hunters were after her. The negress soon dropped the white woman's arm, to which she had clung while in the police court. She felt that it was more fitting to walk a little behind, as was customary among servants.

"She can't git shet o' me," thought Dolly, as the woman strode on so rapidly. "Not tell I sees her comf'bly home—dat

After going on for ten or fifteen minutes Dolly ventured to

speak.

"See here, honey, is you got much furder to go afo' you stops?"
The white woman started as if stung by the touch of the hand
Dolly laid upon her arm, the sound of the vioce that struck her
ear. The sight of her wretched face went to Dolly's heart.

"Why follow me?" asked the woman. "Go home to your

friends, Dolly."

"I ain' a gwine to go home tell I sees you comf'bly settled by

a warm fiah, Miss Silla, I ain't a gwine to."

"There's no comfort for me, Dolly, no home, no friends—all—all are gone! Go to your own home—leave me to myself—to my wretched self."

"No, no, honey, I ain't gwine to—dat ain't de sorter harpin I is, by no means—no mannah o' means. I'se gwine 'long wid you, Miss Silla, plum tell I sees you comf'bly by a good fiah, I is dat, for certain."

The white woman wrung her hands with despairing eyes—

'Leave me! Leave me!" was her cry.

"Miss Silla, answer me dis," said the persevering negress, answer me dis, whar did you come from? Whar was you stayin fo' you got in de p'lice house? Can't you go back to dat same place, where ebber it was? I'll go wid you dar an see you comf'bly fixed up, den dis chile 'll go 'long back to her own

ole roostin' place."

They had drawn themselves close up against the wall of a brick building, whice broke off the cutting wind. The white woman wrung her hands, a driving despair possessed her, and ruled her, and urged her on to the very verge, heart, mind and soul staggered in the carkness of a pitiless night. Not one ray of light pierced it. She felt as if on one she stood, on the other side, against her, was the universe. The odds were too great. She gave up. Her impulse was to rush on to the end of all, to leap off into chaos. All this looked out from her aspect and her eyes. The negress shivered with strange fear as she read the signs in the anguished face.

"Whar was you stayin', honey? Whar is you come from,

honey?" she asked, shaking with cold and fear.

"Anywhere! Everywhere! Nowhere!" shrieked the almost maddened creature, pulling away from Dolly's clutching fingers.

"Den honeys," said the negress, holding her with all her force close up to the wall, "ef you's got no home o' yo' own to go to, come long wid ole Dolly. Ole Dolly's got a comf'ble room, an a clean bed an flah to keep you warm, come along wid Dolly,

honey."

"No, no, no!" muttered the woman, pulling away, but the next instant a stillness fell upon her, she ceased to struggle against Dolly's clutching fingers, she shrunk back closer against the wall, close behind the negress and from the shadow, gazed with lips apart and eyes strained and starting from their sockets, gazed on a face she saw at the window of the carriage that stopped before the door of the building whose wall sheltered them.

The lower hall of the building was one of old King Alcohol's finest palaces. Gilded mirrors, cut glass, easy chairs and fine pictures attracted the passer by. In summer, iced drinks seduced the unsuspicious, in winter, hot drinks, seasoned to suit any taste and to seduce raw-recruits. Here the oldest soldiers of old Alcohol's army were served with as fiery fluids as their shattered nerves might demand, while for the new beginners, mild and

sweetened possets were mixed.

The carriage drew up before the door of this splendid Drink-Palace. Men and youths were going in and out, well-dressed, gentlemanly people. From the carriage stepped a gentleman, wrapped in a costly fur cloak. It was this individual at whom the "born lady" glared with strained eye-balls. Two boys also sprang out of the carriage and all three went into the Drink-palace. They were a handsome trio, boys and man, a strong resemblance showed they were of the same blood. All three were

slenderly and gracefully formed, dark slender faces with black brows slanting toward the nose, the upper lip of the man was adorned with a black moustache, the faces of the boys were as smooth as a young girl's, the elder was sixteen, the younger,

twelve or thirteen.

women stood shivering against the wall. The two In her excitement, the white woman's fingers clutched the black's arm-pretty soon the trio came out, the two boys sprung into the carriage; the man came more slowly, he was talking to another man. The sight of this second man increased the intensity of the white woman's excitement, her fingers increased the force of their clutch until the negress winced with pain. man was large, portly and elderly, with a broad rubicund face a face that betokened much good eating and some good drinking. The two men seemed to be old acquaintances who were meeting after a lenghtened separation. The younger and handsomer man asked after the other's family, the elder man invited the other to call around—his "girl had a party that night, they would be glad to see him around." Then they shook hands with each other and the elderly man walked away, leaving the younger standing in a reflective mood.

"Come, uncle," cried the younger of the two handsome boys, putting his head out of the window, "you'll freeze your feet;

aren't you going to the theatre with us?"

"No, Fred, I've changed my mind—Puffington, take the boys to the theatre and then drive to my rooms, I'll meet you there." The carriage whirled off and the handsome gentleman drew

his fur-lined cloak closely about his shoulders and walked away.

The fingers released their nervous hold on the negress' arm, and Dolly drew a long breath. She was grievously dissappointed, for she, too, had recognized one of the men as the father of the woman she was with, and her very heart groaned as she saw the man go off and no sign from his daughter.

"'Deed an' 'deed, Miss Silla," she said, deeply depressed, "you orter a' spoke to him—he'd a' tuck you home to yo' ma, Miss Silla. I knows he would, an' a' made you so warm an comf'bly, Miss Silla, I knows he would, Lor', Lor'," a deep

groan broke from her black breast.

Much as the negress prided herself on her acquaintance with "gran' 'quality ways," she had no conception of that impassable gulf that lay between the outcast and the home she had left. Never for one instant was that black and impassable gulf ab-

sent from the outcast's mind.

She wrung her hands as she stood on the shores of that gulf and looked across the black and impassable waste, and in the distance, on the other side, she saw the peace and purity of the home she had abandoned. She wrung her hands, and despair drove her onward—the instinct to escape, to flee from the world, the universe, set wings to her feet, The negress was nimble and kept up with her. She caught her by the arm.

"Whar is you goin' now, honey?" she asked, staying her impetuous steps.

"The river—the river is yonder," replied the miserable crea-

ture in a hoarse whisper.

"You aint a goin' to de riber dis night—dat you aint," said the negress firmly. "De water is too cole,-dat aint de way to do it. Ef you's boun' for to do it, pizen is de easies' way, honey —dat it is."

"They won't give me poison—they fool me—I tried that."

Dolly held on persistently.

"Come 'long wid me, honey, I knows whar you ken git jest as much pizen as you wants to—nuff for settle yo' case two dozen time—come 'long, honey."

The white woman yielded to the other's force and suffered herself to be turned. Dolly was encouraged. She kept up her

talk.

"I knows one o' de wickedes' young doctor-men, Miss Silladey's all bad nuff, dey makes no bones o' cutting up folks an' pokin' in 'mong der innerds, sarchin' out what de good Lord hisself neber 'lowed for nobody to see into."

The white woman allowed herself to be led along, she was

more quiet. Dolly continued:

"Lor" 's she cried, with cheerful confidence, "I knows whar dem doctors lives, Miss Silla. Don't you 'members dat great big brick bodin' house jes a little ways from de Fincher school whar you used to go to study you' book?—dat bodin' house whar so many o' de young Fincher school girls boded? Well, dars whar de young doctor-men now bodes, and my young master, Mas Ed. Charlmon'; he bodes dar. Some o' dem young doctor-men is de wustest in de wul'. I knows, becase I chamber-maided in dat bodin'-house onst. Dey fiddles on Sunday, an' takes dancin' steps, even dough de chuch-bells is ringin', an' one on 'em says he ain't afeerd o' no debel an' no hel!, becase he says der ain't no debil an' no hell—dats de one'll gin you pizen ef you wants it, becaze he ain't afeerd o' de debil. Dis is de way, Miss Silla, we ain't fur off now."

This last was a remonstrance to keep the white woman on the right street, but Dolly failed. She swung suddenly off at right angles and swiftly strode along a street built up with respectable

family residences.

Dolly felt chagrined at this new departure. She had, for the last five minutes, flattered herself that that she would succeed in the scheme of delivery, which had evolved in her brain—she meant to give the woman to the care of the medical students with whom she was quite well acquainted, trusting that they would devise some plan to save her. They trudged on in silence; for the moment, Dolly had no plans, she waited for something to turn up. Something did turn up—a something very unlooked for. Her companion came to a sudden halt before a house, every window of which was brilliantly lighted,

from within came the sounds of music, merry music, and

the pattering of feet.

A line of carriages was drawn by the side-walk. Although it had been more than six years since Dolly had served in the family to which the "born lady" belonged, having entered their service at the Virginia Sulphur Springs, where they were summering, she recognized the house as soon as she looked at it the name was on the door, "Peter Blaine."

Vivid pictures of the comfort and luxury within, rose to her memory and her heart gave a leap of joy. She thought at last the woman would apply to her natural protectors and relatives for relief in her dire extremity, she had no doubt of its being given. In her eagerness, she seized her companion's arm.

"Lor', honey, I's dat glad you's come back to yo' ma an' pa onst more! He's yo' own pa, an' she's yo' own ma, aud dey'll be awful glad to see you, but you sees, honey, deys got suffin gran' goin' on in de way o' company, we'd better jes slip roun' by de alley, an' go in by de side door, an' set by de kitchen fiah, an' get a hot cup o' coffee, an' wont dah be 'joicin' when dey

sees you's come home."

While Dolly was giving this advice, her companion was going along by the row of carriages, looking at each one, until she came to the one they had seen before the Drink-Palace, and from which had descended the handsome man and the two handsome boys. The same portly, paunchy coachman sat on the driver's seat, muffled up in furs so that he looked like a great shaggy bear. The born lady looked up at this individual and asked if that was Mr. Singleton's carriage.

The paunchy man wanted to know what business it was of hers. "You'd better give a decent answer," spoke up Dolly resentfully, "ef you knows what's good for yoself—dis is a bawn lady, dis is. Mine yo mannahs wen you speaks to yo bettahs."

Whereupon the paunchy driver condescended to reply that it was the Singleton carriage, and what then? The white woman asked if Mr. Singleton was in the house.

"You may see for yourself," said the paunchy man in a surly toue, turning toward the house and looking at the window, "you

can see him if you look."

The two women looked at the window. The lace curtains were parted in the middle and drawn to either side, the figures of two persons standing in the room were plainly visible, the brilliant light illuminated the two forms, one was a young girl, in evening dress, the other was the same handsome man whom they had heard called Singleton.

"Lor'," said Dolly, in a whisper, "ef dat ain't Margret-how

she have growed, to be sho!

"Hush—keep still!" said her companion, whose eyes were fixed on the window scene with painful intensity. The young girl and the handsome man seemed to be talking together, the former held a bouquet of flowers in her hand, she drew out one

and gave it to the handsome man, He received it with gallant homage, touching it to his lips, then put it in his button hole. The white woman looking on seemed strangely affected, she started, restrained herself, and turned again to the paunchy coachman.

"I must speak to your master," she said. "Can you leave

your horses to go and call him out."

The audacity of this request seemed to strike the paunchy driver dumb. For a moment he could not speak. Turning his head first on one side and then on the other as if a little dazed, he solemnly gazed down from his lofty eminence on the poor worms looking up at him from the muddy carth.

"Leave my horses?" he stammered, the preposterousness of the idea again overcame him. Speech was inadequate. At this instant the hall door of the Blaine house opened and a tall figure wrapped in a fur cloak came down the stone steps. The driver pointed his whip at the tall figure,

"Yon he comes—call him yo'self," he said and subsided

into the depths of his furs.

The white woman turned to meet the handsome gentleman, his eyes were down-bent, as if some puzzling thought occupied his mind, in fact, at that very moment he was asking himself the question which he had gone to the Blaine House to get answer-

ed and which had not been answered-

"What has become of her?" was the question. Within three feet was the one of whom he was thinking—he passed her unconsciously—no instinct turned him to look at or speak to her. She put herself before him, he moved on, heeding her as little as if she had been a post. She followed him and laid her hand on his arm, he shook her off impatiently.

"Out of my way," he muttered, if "you don't want a police-

man called."

"Call the police if you choose, Arthur Singleton," said the

woman, "but hear me you must."

"Who are you? What do you want?" he asked, a sudden alarm seizing him. Was there something in the tones of the voice he had just heard that brought up the past?

"Take me to some place where I can speak in private, and you

shall know who I am and what I want.'

The man drew back with distrust. "Not until I know who

you are," he said.

The street lamp shone brightly from across the street, the light fell directly on Singleton's pale, handsome face, the woman's was in the shadow. With a swift movement she whirled his back to the lamp, and turned herself so that the lamp's rays fell on her face, the brown veil was thrown back, the drink-branded face was naked to the eye of the man who had once looked upon that face as the one attractive thing on earth. A cold horror crept over him.

"Ah!" she said, in bitter derision, "you know me now, Arthur Singleton."

"Great God!—Drusilla Blaine!" he cried, staggering back-

ward.

"Do not speak that name—here—so near this house," she com-

manded in a suppressed tone.

For a brief instant Singleton stood aghast and undecided what to do. It required no second glance to show him to what depths of degredation the woman bad descended. Had he obeyed the impulse of his feelings he would have fled far and fast. It was always his first impulse to run from anything disagreeable or troublesome, true he had only a moment before been curious to know what had become of this woman, but he had no desire for this sort of thing. Greatly to the disgust of the paunchy coachman, Singleton opened the carriage door, put the woman in it, mounted himself to the driver's seat. They drove off leaving the dumfounded Dolly standing and staring.

"Laws!" she said, after recovering her mind and turning her steps homeward. "Laws! I's dat glad she done foun him! I's dat glad she'll git a good fiah an' make herself comf'ble and

gin out dat pizen business."

After a moment's reflection her thoughts again found vent in words. Wagging her turbaned head with a sage and solemn air,

"Lor'! Lor'! she murmured, "Wat a quar wul dis is-wat a

quar wul!"

Thus relieved, Dolly trotted briskly down the street and in a few minutes hove in sight of the light shining from the window of her enemy's little grocery store. All at once the affairs of the "bawn lady" went back out of sight, and the old chronic quarrel with her neighbor, the "Arish ooman," came to the front of Dolly's mind. She broke into a chuckle, and immediately set her fertil brain to concocting a plausible story which would account for her non appearance at the magistrate's office. Said story was to redound to Dolly's honor and send daggers to

the heart of the enemy.

"Dis niggah'l gin you to know, you po' white trash," she muttered in pursuance of this laudable scheme, "as de bigges' lawyer in de town comed arter me, an' took me outen dat low-down place, an' dat big lawyer says, says he, 'Dolly, wot you a doin' in sech a place as dis?' an' I says, says I, 'Dem' oudacious p'licemen, dey fech me yer all 'long o' dat po' white Arish ooman who keeps a one-hoss groc'y sto,' says I. Den he says, says he, 'Come 'long wid me, Dolly, dis ain't no place fur fus'-qual'ty servants as you is, come 'long wid me an' stay two free days wid my wife an' chillens,' says he. So I went 'long wid dat ar big lawyer to his big fine house, an' stay all day wid dem chillens o' his'n, an' dem chillens is rale fust-class quality chillens, dey is dat, sho'—Lors a massy! wots dis?"

She had reached her own door and was fumbling in her pocket for the key, when her feet came in contact with something that lived and moved. Dolly started back a step.

"Wots dis yer scrouched up agin my do'-eh?-dogs an' cats?

Clar out! clar out!"

With that she began to bombard the intruder with balls of snow. The moans became whimperings of an unmistakable human sound. Dolly ceased snow-balling.

"Dem soun's zackly like chillens—human chillens," she said. Cautiously passing her hand over the whimpering things, she

felt three little human heads.

"Lor"! ef dey ain't sho'-nuff chillens!—wot on airth is you a doin' out yer dis time o' night?—a freezin of yo'selves to def!"

Dragging out the shivering, whimpering little creatures to the light of the street lamp, she saw they were the Gaff children,

whom she had last seen in the magistrate's office.

By dint of much shaking and persistent questioning Dolly learned from the eldest child that their father, after being released from the court, went off and got drunk, came home drunk and beat their mother so badly that she was laid up in bed, without fire or wood, and they had gone on the street to beg, but no one had given them a penny.

"Dey nebber gin you nuffin'—eh?" said Dolly indignantly. "Dey's nobody, deys nuffin but po' white trash anyhow! Come wid Dolly, chillens; Dolly'll teck you to sho'-nuff fust-quality folks, what'l gin you, an' yo' po' ma wittles to eat, much as

you ken stuff. Come 'long, chillens-hit hain't fur."

Dolly clutched the two smaller by the hands, the largest trotted after, and all four walked off swiftly in the direction of the Finisher Institute.

CHAPTER VI.

RETURNS TO THE FINISHER INSTITUTE AND RELATES HOW THE CHRISTMAS FEAST DID NOT TURN OUT AS ANTICIPATED.

At the appointed hour there came along the uncarpeted corridor, a patter of young feet, and a succession of taps on the cousins' door.

"Come in!" called out Miss Charlmonte.

And in flocked a bevy of girls, buoyant and gurgling over with young life. Among them were Miss Wedrington the stately, Miss Mopson the sentimental, the blushing Rosa Amelia, and the bouncing Miss Smidge. All of these young ladies were the classmates of Miss Charlmonte and Miss Ashford, but it was an open secret that some of them remained in the classes for form's sake, never knowing, never trying to know, a lesson. At recitations the answers were whispered by the next girl, and the teach-

ers winked at the device. Miss Smidge was one who never, by any accident knew a lesson, but who always sung out the answers to the questions with a bold, confident air. There had been a time when the teachers exerted themselves to make Miss Smidge study. Finding the task hopeless, they had given it up and left her to slip along any fashion (her bills were regularly paid). It was well understood in the school, that Miss Smidge would "graduate" after a certain time, and would retire with a diploma, tied with blue ribbon, and then her mama, who was wealthy, would launch her in society to catch a husband.

"As I live, girls," cried Miss Smidge, looking around in search of the good things, "they haven't got the things out of the box

yet."

Miss Charlmonte explained that they thought the girls would like the fun of helping to unpack the box. "Come, Sophy, you shall help."

Miss Smidge went at the business with alacrity. The others

stood by looking on with admiration.

First they took out the fruit, then came the fruit cake, then a paper was removed and an extraordinarily large brown-baked turkey was exposed to view and "Oh! how splendid!" "What. a monster!" "How nice!" etc., etc., were the exclamations that broke from lovely lips.

"De-licious!" cried Miss Smidge in a gustatory ecstacy.

"Now, we will take out his royal highness—Lift him by the legs, Sophy, I take his neck—Hold fast! Up with him, There!"

They landed him safely on the pine board top of the box which did duty as a dish. A little note was found tied to the top of a pine apple, addressed to "Miss Constance Ashford," who among all the chattering guests, had remained dreamily silent. She read the note and kissed it, and tears filled her violet eyes, at which manifestations Miss Wedrington smiled satirically

"It's just too good," said Miss Smidge, extatically. you think so, Tow?"

Tow was the "nick" name Miss Smidge had bestowed on Miss Wedrington—a delicate compliment to the peculiar color of that young lady's hair as well, as to the word her initials made, Teresa Olivia Wedrington.

"Quite nice," calmly replied the Senator's daughter.

"What do you say, little coz?" asked Miss Charlmonte, glancing at the dreaming beauty at the window. "Does not the smell of Aunt Rachel's cookery make you hungry, Conny?"

"I shan't touch him, Roma. Not for the world! I won't touch

him!" replied the beauty, with tears in her voice.

"Why not?" and "Why not?" asked a chorus of voices, in astonishment.

"She talks as if it were poisoned," remarked Miss Wedrington, in her cool way.

"It is poisoned for me! I don't see why mamma sent that

turkey of all others. I won't touch him-It was quite cruel to kill him."

"But, Conny, dear," said her cousin pursuasively, "don't you know the larger a turkey is the better it is. I'm sure you'll find

this fellow very tender and nice."

"But I can't touch him, Roma—read Mamma's note, she says she sends old Don Pedro because he was the biggest on the Island. Oh, how cruel! and he used to eat out of my hand."

"Don Pedro!" said Miss Roma. "Is this Don Pedro?

sorry they killed him—Poor old fellow."
"But who was he? What do you mean, anyhow?" asked

Miss Smidge.

"He was so funny, girls," said Miss Roma, putting the finishing touches to the table. "I wish you could have seen him when alive! Every morning he would come under Conny's window and strut and drag his yellow wings on the ground and sputter and spread himself; there never was such a proud, pompous old thing!-and Conny always gave him crumbs to eat out of her hand. He knew Conny and would follow her about all over the yard. I used to think he fancied we admired him and tried to show off before us. I'm sorry, Conny, but it can't be helped now, we may as well eat him now he is dead. Don't you think so, dear?"

"I can't—I'd feel like a cannibal," returned Miss Conny, with

tearful pathos.

"Turkeys are intended to be killed and eaten," said Miss Wedrington, who had no patience with the sentimentalism of the little beauty.

"Aunt will be sorry, she never dreamed that you would feel

so about him," said Miss Roma.

"What a goosy goose!" cried Miss Smidge, gigling and show-ing all of her large teeth. "If he'd eaten out of my hand since the first minute he was hatched, I'd eat him when I got hungry, would'nt you, Rosamele?"

Rosa Amelia sympathized with Miss Conny. She said she

couldn't eat anything she had petted and fed.

"Don't you think, girls," said Roma, sharpening the carving knife on the steel; "don't you think if King Arthur or Alfred, whichever it was, had sat before a bird like that, he would have

knighted him instead of that great tough loin of beef?"

"I hate beef," said the dreamy beauty at the window, surreptitiously wiping a tear from the corner of her soft violet eyes. The little girl was home-sick, she pined for a sight of the loving faces and a touch of the loving hands at home, perhaps also she dreamed of another voice and another face, but only in the deepest recess of her young heart, did she admit to herself that she loved that other voice and that other face, handsome though the the one was, and sweet the other.

"In my opinion," said Miss Wedrington, with that air of conscious superiority becoming to an American Senator's daughter, "it was a very silly thing for a king to do. What would the world think if my papa in the Senate, should go and bestow honors and titles on a piece of bloody meat?"

"Oh, it wasn't bloody meat, Theresa," the little Rosa Amelia hastened to correct, "it was baked brown and nice, and he was

so hungry."

"Brown or bloody, boiled or baked," replied the Senator's daughter, with a lofty air, "my papa wouldn't have done any-

Kitty appeared with plates and forks. A frown was on Kitty's usually cheerful brow—behind her was an object which had rufher good temper. All the girls stared at this object, except Miss

Charlmonte and Miss Ashford, who did not see the new comer. "I couldn't help it," said Kitty, answering the astonished looks of the young ladies, "she's got the impudence of old

Satan, and would push herself in."

Kitty darted an angry glance at the dusky creature which excited her ire, and this was no other than Dolly herself craning her head over the Irish girl's shoulders, and peering among the group of girls in search of the one she had come to see. An anxious, solemn expression was on her black face. She still clutched two little hands of two little girls, while the third clung to her skirts. The children stared wildly, shivered and shook and stared and clung to Dolly.

"I wants ter see Miss Roma Charmon'," said Dolly, firmly enough, no fear of a repulse embarrassed her, notwithstanding

the untimely intrusion. The girl looked around.

"Why, if it isn't Dolly—dear old Dolly."

"They shook hands joyously. The black face beamed. Then

it frowned and darted a viperish glance at Kitty.

"I knowed as Miss Roma an' Miss Conny wouldn't 'fuse to see ole Dolly, comp'ny or no comp'ny,' she said, indignantly. "No, indeed, never! Conny, here's Dolly. It looks like home to see a home face, Dolly."

"Lor' bless de chile !—jes as angely as eber!" was her greeting

as Miss Ashford shook hands warmly with her.

"What can we do for you, Dolly. and where did you pick up those poor little things?" asked Miss Charlmonte, casting commisserating eyes on the little beggars.

Dolly's joyous beams gave way to a look of solemn earnest-

ness.

"Miss Roma," she began, after darting a glance of withering scorn at Kitty"fo' de Lord, Miss Roma, dis nigger had no 'tention o' trudin' 'pon you dis yer onconcionable time o' night, 'ceptin de 'casion was so monsus pressin' an' couldn' be put off 'dout riskin' life an' lim' o' dese po' chilluns, which I knowed Miss Roma nor Miss Conny wouldn 'prove of, becaze I knowed Miss Roma an' Miss Conny is got hearts chuck full o' feelin's, which bawned ladies is natilly got.

Dolly spoke with a great deal of suppressed excitement. She

panted for breath. Her long walk in the cold, and the unusual events of the day, had worked up her nervous system to a high The two Southern girls saw that something seriously affected her.

"You need never apologize for coming to us, Dolly," said Miss Charlmonte, kindly, "you know how glad we always are to see any of the dear old Island folks. What can we do for you, Dolly? Will you tell us now, or will you sit by the fire until these young ladies eat their supper and then tell it?"

The solemnity of Dolly's face became tremendous. "Miss Roma," she said "der ain't no use awaitin', I ain't agwine to 'sturb you long—I don't ask nuffin for myself—you knows as Mars Ed'rd gins me a quatly 'lowance o' money which is more'n 'bundant for ter keep dis chile a-goin', 'ceptin, Miss Roma, it do happen as I gets fro wid one quatly 'lowance 'fo' de nex' come roun', which is de case dis presen' minute, else I mout a gin dese chilluns an' der po' ma, a mossel ter eat mysef 'dout fetchin' 'em yer, a-boderin you an' Miss Conny, dis time o' night, 'specially when you's got all dese (here Dolly's black face swiftly underwent one of those changes for which it was remarkable, the deep solemnity flashed out and a glad grin took its place as she looked around on the wondering row of young girls whose eyes were fixed upon her)—all dese sho nuff angels 'dout no wings, a-payin' you a visit."

The angels all smiled.

"So you want these hungry little things fed?—Is that it, Dol-

ly? Well, we've got a plenty as you see."

Miss Charlmonte cut slices of bread and turkey and made sandwiches and thrust them into the little hands, but the little things were so dazed and astonished they seemed not to know what to do with the food after they had it. They continued to stare, one hand clutching Dolly, the other the sandwiches. Miss Charlmonte put a piece into their mouths.

"Eat—eat fast!" she said, closing their little white teeth upon the tempting bait, and then it was a sight to see their famished eagerness. Words of pity and sympathy broke from the "angels widout no wings," who stood around, gazing on the

"Miss Roma," resumed Dolly, the grin of gladness having fled from her face and the deep solemnity come back, "ef your only knowed dese chillun's ma. Lor'! Lor'! ef you only knowed her!"

Dolly's manner was calculated to create the impression on her young audience that they had lost the world by not knowing the

wonderful Mrs. Gaff.

Dolly went on in the most solemn way:

"Miss Roma, dem chillens' ma is dis blessed minute mos starved to def, an' hit aint 'long o' no fault o' hern, Miss Roma, not a bit, dem chillen's ma is de hardes wukin 'ooman you eber seed; its all along o' dat oudacious husban o' hern dem chillens' ma wuks hawd a-washin close, an' dat ar oudacious husband o' hern, he drinks it up, an' now he's done broke her bones an' is tuck up by de p'lice, an' dar she is, nary moufful to eat since yistiddy, which is God's trufe, Miss Roma, an' nary spec' o' fiah do it's cole nuff in my 'pinion to plum freeze out de debil hisself,"

Dolly had been encouraged while speaking by looks and murmurs of sympathy from the tender-hearted "angels widout no

wings."

"Poor little things!" said one. "What a shame of their father!" said another.

"How dreadful to get drunk and beat her!" said another.

"We must make up a purse." said Miss Roma.
"I have heard my papa say," spake up the Senator's daughter, with lofty disdain, "that such people ought to go to the poor house—that's what it's built for."

"Eat, eat—as much as you can, there's plenty more," said Miss Charlmonte, replenishing the three little hands, which

were now eagerly stretched forth.

More than any one, Dolly enjoyed seeing the children eat. She bent her body down to get her face nearer to theirs, her hands resting on her knees, craning out her turbaned head.

"To be sho!" she cried, "dey is hongry! Lor!" Then she straightened up and rolled her little beady eyes from one to the other of the young faces before her, as it were, taking the

measure of their hearts and charity.

"Miss Roma," she said "ef any dese gran' young ladies wid rich pa's to keep 'em up so fine, always plenty ter eat an' ter w'ar, and plenty good fiahs to wawm by, ef dey was jes ter come long wid me an' see dese po' chillens' ma, a-layin' up dar by her po' lone self in de dark, no fiah, nary crum', no wittles, mary mossel, dey little harts would plum' melt in der buzzums, dey would, dat sho!"

This pathetic appeal was not without effect. The young faces

looked sympathetic. The little Rosa Amelia was tearful.

"I wish she had our supper--poor thing," she said, wiping her eyes.

"So do I—we don't want it!" cried Miss Jones.

"What a splendid idea! Do you really mean it?" cried Miss Charlmonte, eagerly.

"She'll think it dropped from Heaven," said one.

"What do you say, little coz?" asked Miss Charlmonte. "Send it or eat it?"

Miss Ashford thought it was not for them to say. had been invited to supper, if they didn't feel like eating, they could send it to the poor. She didn't wish anything and would not eat anything.

Then one after another declared they weren't hungry one particle and had a thousand times rather give it to the poor wo-

man.

Miss Smidge, who was always hungry, looked wofully cut. She rolled her eyes from one to the other hoping that some voice would be raised to put down the foolish proposition. On the contrary a voice was raised to carry it out, "Put it to the vote." said one, and it was put to the vote. All in favor of the poor woman were told to raise their right hands.

"Roma, you and I must not vote," said Miss Ashford, who feared that it would not be fair to the girls to "beat" them out of

their supper.

Up went every right hand.

"Charity has it." said Miss Charlmonte.

"Try it again, Roma," said her cousin, "perhaps they would prefer eating first and sending what is left to the woman.'
"The crumbs?" said Miss Charlmonte, scornfully.

"Well anyhow, try it again," persisted the cousin. Miss Smidge gave her a grateful glance; Miss Wedrington looked on with a disdainful smile. Dolly's little beady eyes danced with eager expectancy as she watched their faces.

The vote was again taken and with the same result.

"That settles it." said Miss Charlmonte, then she bade Kitty to inform Pat that if he wished to earn half a dollar he might come to her, she meant to go at once with Dolly and see the woman whose husband had broken her bones and left her to starve and freeze. She called on her cousin to help her re-pack the things in the box, after which she overhauled her boxes and drawers and made up quite a bundle of things, flannel skirts, stockings, dresses, etc., etc., then there came protests and remonstrances against her going out in the cold and the dark. Some looked upon it as dangerous, others as disagreeable and others as improper, but the self-willed young lady treated all objections as mere straws.

"Danger? what's to hurt? Pat will keep off all the lions and

tigers—Pat is strong "

"Bad men," timidly hinted Rosa Amelia.

"They won't look at me—I'm not as pretty as you little Rosa," said the girl tying on her hood.

"I wouldn't go out in the cold for all the beggars in town—it's

downright foolish," said Miss Smidge.

Kitty wanted to know what Mrs. Finisher would say to one of her young ladies going out that time of night? The young lady laughingly replied that it did not matter, her grandfather had settled all that when he put her there; her grandfather knew she could take care of herself. So, hooded and booted and gloved the girl started off, Dolly, holding the two smaller children's hands, took the lead; Pat, with the box, brought up the rear.

A dead and disagreeable silence fell on the girls after the little cavalcade had disappeared. The faces were a study, they all, more or less, expressed something that made the sensitive little beauty by the window feel very uncomfortable, especially Miss Wedrington's, which seemed ready to break out in disdainful

"Cousin Roma is too impulsive," she said, by way of apolgiz-

"So charitable," said the senator's daughter, with a satirical

smile, "so very charitable!"

"She's real good," said Rosa Amelia, accepting the literal meaning of Miss Wedrington's words and not translating her

"She's quite too dreadful good for me!" said the outspoken Smidge, "and whatever you girls mean to do I'm sleepy and going to bed—so there!" she jumped up, with a loud smack set a kiss on Miss Ashford's cheek and bounced out of the room. broke the ice; each girl followed the Smidge example and soon the beauty was alone. When out in the hall Miss Wedrington; whom some of the grls had dubbed Miss Mark Antony because once she had rendered Antony's celebrated Shakespeare speech over Cæsar's dead body as they thought very finely, called the other girls around her for a small confab before retiring, notwithstanding they had each and all declared themselves very sleepy a moment before.

"Tow means to wake up snakes," said the Smidge, seizing Rosa Amelia about the waist, "let's see what she's up to."

Every girl ran up and stood in a circle around Miss Mark Antony who was at the door of her own room leaning against the wall looking at them with a cool satirical expression.

"Well. girls, I only wanted to express the hope that none of you will feel any ill effect from the luxurious supper you have

enjoyed."

"Luxurious—cat's foot! I call it a downright swindle to fool a fellow so," retouted Miss Smidge, giving vent to her pent up disappointment. Miss Smidge, the only girl in a house of six boys, had caught from the boys the habit of calling herself a fellow as boys call themselves and comrades fellows, though why the word fellow should be deemed more applicable to the male sex than the female may not be easily explained.

"It is to be hoped," resumed Miss Mark Antony, "that none of us will take an appoplectic fit or have the night-mare before

morning."

"I wish to goodness gracious we had the ghost of a chance to get appoplexy-I never was so hungry, and the nasty beggars'll stuff it all down."

"As if plain meat and bread weren't good enough for paupers! My papa says that the poor house is built for poor people, and

that's where they ought to go."

"I hate niggers!" cried Miss Smidge spitefully. "I wish that ugly, nasty nigger had been in Jericho before she came here!"

"Or had come a half hour later," said Miss Rosa Amelia.

"Half hour later?" Miss Wednington smiled with superior

astuteness. "That high and mighty Southern girl took care of that."

"What do you mean, Tow?" asked Miss Smidge, whose per-

ceptives were never particularly penetrating.

"You never suspected that it was a put up job?—just like you Sophy Smidge," returned the Senator's daughter. "Don't you know that negro was too smart not to come just in the nick of time?"

"Good Gracious me! Who'd have thought it, but what on earth did they want to do that for? Why fool a fellow in that

way?

"Some people like to do just what no other person would ever think of doing and that Island girl is one of that sort," replied Miss Wedrington, with so grand and convincing an air, every girl went to her pillow that night under the impression that the two girls from the South had disappointed them with malice a-fore thought, as the lawyers put it.

CHAPTER VII.

A MEETING AFTER SIX YEARS.

Singleton sat on the driver's seat, by the side of the paunchy and proud Mr. Puffington, who always looked down on pedestrians with something of the feeling which a king on his throne is supposed to look down on less fortunate people. Singleton tried the solace of a cigar, but even that could not banish the tormenting memories and reflections.

"It's deuced hard on a man," he thought, "this sort of a thing to turn up—deuced hard just at this time. I suppose she wants money, and money's exactly what I want myself and can't get.

Confound it."

The expletive was uttered aloud.

"What, sir?" asked the dignified Mr. Puffington, who had been puzzling his adipose brains, conjecturing what that low creature in the carriage was to his mistress's brother. That she was there in the carriage, that he was driving her, was an insult to the family he served, and a worse insult to his own dignity.

"Drive on," was the curt rejoinder.

"Here we are, sir!" said the insulted Puffington, a moment after, as he drew up his horses before the door of Singleton's

lodgings.

Singleton jumped down, opened the carriage door, and offered his hand to assist the woman to descend, but the hand was not noticed, the dilapidated woman got out by herself and followed the elegant gentleman into the house and up a wide and softly carpeted stairway into a luxuriously appointed bed-chamber. A glowing fire warmed and welcomed them. Velvet-lined chairs opened their hospitable arms, inviting to comfort and rest, but

the pair that came in from the cold and discomfort without, held such an amount of discomfort within their own breasts as no

friendly fire or luxurious upholstery could alleviate.

Singleton drew a chair close to the fire and invited the woman to sit and warm. Her face was spotted, purple and white, with cold, her frame shivered, nervous chills passed over it. She put her ill-shod feet on the fender, they were wet and clogged with snow, which melted and steamed. Her skirts, muddied, torn, and covered with flakes of snow also, steamed as the snow melted—a vapor surrounded her, but did not conceal from Singleton's disgusted eyes, the wretchedness to which she was reduced. Her eyes were fastened on the fire, the heat seemed to subdue and soothe her. Singleton began to fear she might like it so well as to stay longer than he had intended she should. He grew uneasy.

What if his nephews should return before she left?

How would he explain her presence in his chamber? She sat so still, he thought she was falling asleep, his anxiety increased. He began to fabricate tales to tell the boys, anything but the facts of his past acquaintance with her before she had fallen to what she was.

After waiting some time for her to come back from the desolate waste of memory in which she was lost, Singleton felt that he himself must break the silence and get the disagreeable interview over, he began by telling her how shocked and pained he was on finding her circumstances so changed, and begged her to believe if there was any thing he could do to assist her, he would

She made no reply, she sat still, the steam from her wet gar-

ments making a mist around her.

take great pleasure, etc., etc.

He asked her if she had not heard him?—if she would not speak to him? Then, without raising her eyes from the glowing coals on which they were fixed, in a tone that seemed to be held down and suppressed, as if she feared it might break into passion or frenzy, she replied that she had not come to ask for assistance.

Rigors passed over her frame as she spoke. Then he wondered what the mischief she had come for? Surely she could not be so insane as to fancy any gentleman would now desire her acquaintance?

After a moment he again spoke, he hoped she would not hesitate to apply to him if she needed assistance—to whom had she

a better right to apply?

"Let that pass," she interrupted, in the same suppressed and subdued tone, still gazing on the fire. What did she see in the coals? What did she think she saw? Did the innocent days of her girlhood cry out to her from the flames? Did her wrecked womanhood mock and gibe at her from the glowing flre?

Singleton felt a growing uneasiness, her strange manner made him nervous, had she reproached him, had she hurled on his guilty head hot anathemas, he could have better borne the interview, this he had expected, this he could have understood, but to sit there, silent and steaming, this sort of thing was not among his past experiences. Meanwhile the fear that his nephews would pop in at any moment, irritated him. How they would wink and crack jokes at his expense; he cursed himself for a fool, he never should have permitted her to enter his rooms. Impatient as he was to get rid of her, the past made him wish to do it kindly, and something indefinable about the woman, warned him not to arouse her, warned him to soothe and placate, if pos-To this end, he murmured something of his ardent wish to atone for any wrong he had ever done.

"It is too late," she said, "the past is done forever, nothing

can recall it, nothing change it."

"You are yet young in years, Drusilla, the past may be forgotten and the future—"

He did not finish his smooth and suave sentence, the woman

gave him a glance that set his nerves in a tremor.

"No!" she said, with steadiness, a steadiness that came of a strong effort to subdue the impulse to give way to emotions more violent. "No; you speak falsely when you say I am young, and you know it. I was young six years ago when I first saw you six thousand years have gone over me since then, and you know

"Tell me what you wish, Drusilla? I am at your service-

command me. It is getting late."

"Late?" The word roused her to a tigress. She turned and faced the handsome gentleman. The lamp-light fell full upon The marks, vice makes on unhappy wretches, were too plainly seen. It was Singleton's nature to shun the unpleasant, he felt like rushing out and away from the painful sight.

"Late? You wish to hurry me away? not long detain you, I came to warn you." Very well, I shall

"Warn—me?"

"Yes, warn you! Why were you at that house to-night?-by the side of the young daughter of that house?—you have done

mischief enough, Arthur Singleton, to that family."

Singleton felt relieved. He could with perfect truth set him-self right on this point. He assured her he had gone at the invitation of her father, gone to inquire about her, he had been absent in Europe six years, had heard nothing in all that time, and that was all. Then he asked why she had left her father's

"Why?" she repeated, looking at him in a way he did not like. "Do fathers forgive daughters who bring disgrace on their houses? Do fathers keep unmarried daughters who become

mothers, in their houses?",

The man was shocked. Something like a conscience pricked him.

"And you never told me that!"

"I—never—told you!" she repeated in a way and with a look that made Singleton shake. "I never told you! Had you not fled the country? Had you not left me alone to face the shame and the ruin that rose up to overwhelm me?"

"I never dreamed of that!—I never dreamed of that!" he cried, then seeing that she relapsed into quietude, and stood by the fire again looking on it, he ventured to ask the sex of the child, and started back with a fresh shock when she replied that it was of that sex which should be strangled at birth. As if to apologize for his curiosty he gently remarked, it was but natural he should feel some interest in the child.

"Natural!" repeated she with scornful emphasis. She made a dash at the door as if to escape, then rushed back and fixed her wild, burning eyes on the handsome but troubled Singleton.

"I did not come to you, Arthur Singleton," she said, panting with suppressed feeling, yet holding it down by hard effort, "I did not seek you to talk of what has been—let that go. If I ever condemned you, I condemn myself more. I came not to speak of the child—men like you fling forth flashes of their lives with as little thought for the beings they endow with existence as that fire has for the sparks it throws out—sparks from the fire go up and are lost in the darkness of the night—human sparks are lost in the everlasting darkness; but enough of that—I saw you with that young girl of the house you had dishonored—I, in the street, unworthy to enter it, you, the tempter, stood by her side. I came to warn you—go not there again, seek that girl not again. That is all."

Singleton felt a chill of dread and fear creep over him, not at the words she spoke, but the manner of speaking them, the expression of her eyes—felt that sort or dread and fear one feels when alone with the insane who are liable to break forth in frenzy. It occurred to Singleton that if he were to induce her to swallow a good dose of brandy it would settle her, either quiet her nerves or stupify her enough for a policeman to take charge of her. Once out of his room he cared not what might become of He brought out a bottle from a closet, poured out a heavy dose, and presented it. Eagerly her shaking hand received and eagerly she quaffed it. He tried her with another, but she waived the second glass aside; again he proffered it—she struck it from his hand, a red fury in her eyes, and Singleton saw to his terror that instead of quieting, the brandy had inflamed. Fresh strength and increased aggressiveness were manifested. She glared at the furniture as if each chair and table were a hated foe, then she glared at the man as if in him she saw forty foes. She broke into a bitter and derisive laugh, which made Singleton turn pale with terror.

"Ha! ha!" she cried, "You seem quite comfortable here, Arthur Singleton, comfortable as a nabob. Do you remember the time when I too, was comfortable? I too, proud as a prin-

cess? A pretty princess I am now-ha! ha! Look! Look! Arthur Singleton!"

Catching him by the shoulders, she whirled him around so that they both faced the mirror which hung against the wall, it reflected their two forms. What a contrast! The man was ashen pale, but he was no coward, the bravest may turn pale in the presence of lunacy, and by this time Singleton felt that the woman was on the very verge of frenzy, a frenzy such as frequently attacks the followers of that brave old King Alcohol.

"Ah!" she hissed, her burning eyes fixed on his reflection in the glass. "You are handsome yet, Arthur Singleton, you are as sleek and well-fed and daintily dressed as in that time six years ago--six thousand years ago, we stood together side by side, by the sea, and looked in its clear waters—six thousand Do you remember, Arthur Singleton? years ago! stood side by side, as now-both were handsome then. has become of that woman—eh? what has become of her? man is as handsome as ever-not a wrinkle more in his face, not a wrinkle in his heart, the same selfish, false heart-but the woman--Ah! ha! ha! (The laugh was that of a drink-crazed creature) See what the woman is! Look on her! Look at the man-ha! ha! ha! Oh! look at her!—Beautiful! beautiful! beautiful!--with brandy and gin, and vice and despair! Who first started that woman down to despair? eh? eh? Would you die for her now? Would you climb cliffs to find flowers for her hair?—Flowers?-flames of fire would suit her better now! What do you think, Arthur Singleton? Look at you hag-half mad, half drunk—Is she like the young girl—a child in years, a child in experience, the daughter of wealth, that you knew six years ago? Who laid his devilish devices to mislead her? Who wound his his net around her, and made plans to entrap her? and brought to their execution the cunning gained by long practice, and large experience, and when he had subdued that ignorant girl to his will, when she became as clay in the potter's hand; when he knew that, soul and body, he possessed her, and ruled her, and that she lived only for him and through him, and when he had slaked his selfish desires, and dreaded the coming of a father whose keen eyes might detect the mean game he was playing, who fled in the night, without a word of warning, without a care for the creature he abandoned to despair and shame? Fled like a coward, and put the wide ocean between him and the wretch he had ruined?--Who-"

"I did not know—I call God to witness," pleaded the man pale and trembling—for the woman yet held him in the strong clutches of her fingers and still fixed him with the frenzy of her eyes, "I call God to witness I never dreamed that you would suffer so seriously—I thought you would forget the dream we had indulged in there by the seaside; forget one not worthy of you and bestow yourself on some more deserving man; forget the

little drama we played together."

"Played! You call it play then (fire seemed to stream from her eyes). Oh! ho! that's the way you put it, eh? Play for you, and death, body and soul, for us, eh? Oh! when I come to think of what I might have been but for that devilish play by the seaside, the blood flies into my head, the world whirls and whirls, and you—oh! you! ha! ha! you are a man, ha! ha! it was play to you, eh? to you—smooth, cool, selfish, scheming,

you!-you!",-

The last line was passed, the boundary line which separated the realm of reason from the realm of frenzy, with each emphatic "you" the voice rose higher until it became a shriek, the last thread of reason was snapped and the wretched creature's mind submerged in a flood of drunken delirium. She threw herself upon Singleton, bearing him backward by weight as well as fierce impetuosity. She was a tall, full formed woman; with each you! You! YOU! the shriek grew higher, the frenzy wilder. Singleton was fully alive to the danger of his situation yet, at first, he fought only on the defensive—the education of the class to which he belonged had imbued him with the feeling that it was unfitting for a man to strike a woman, even in self defence, therefore he confined his efforts to warding off the blows she aimed at him; he had faith in his own vigor and endurance, and scorned the idea that he could not gain control of a woman by mere strength without the necessity of resorting to blows; he did not at the moment fully realize the fact that frenzy gives an unnatural In the desperate struggle that ensued they were dragged across the floor, over the furniture, striking against tables, overturning chairs; still Singleton refrained from dealing blows although his crazed antagonist, whenever she managed to free an arm and hand from his grasp, rained blows upon him with no weak force. It was more than Singleton could tamely bear. Pain overcame the principle, the pride of his sex in the matter of striking back; he began to see that he could not save himself by merely endeavoring to restrain her; she was too strong, too active, and too mad. Fear for his own life, as well as anger roused by pain, prompted him at last to put forth every effort to subdue and conquer this creature who seemed bent on doing her worst. He gave blow for blow with such telling force the woman's face and bosom became purple and bloody, still her clutch was as tight, her vindictiveness as unconquered as at first. In their struggles they passed a writing desk; on the desk was a small marble paper weight, a pretty carved deer reposing on the ground amid grasses. The animal looked with innocent eyes on the mad scene going on between these two human beings who had once sought each other's presence as the one greatest bliss earth. or heaven could give. The woman seized the paper weight as more efficient to deal vengeance than her own hands. seeing his danger, knowing a blow from such a thing, toy though it was, might prove fatal, attempted to wrest it from her grasp. Round and round they went in the desperate struggle. The

woman seemed rather to gain strength than to lose it. She bore him backward with all her might trying to throw him down. A blow with the antlered deer in her hand would have been no trifling thing. She bore him back toward the mirror in which they had looked on the reflection of their two forms, and with one supreme effort flung him against it with such force and fury as crashed it into a hundred fragments. Singleton fell among the broken glass, at this instant she managed to wrest her right wrist from his grasp and dealt him a blow with the marble deer. The blood spouted from his temples; he sank down and for one brief instant a feeling of rest seemed to be stealing over him, but, back of that feeling of rest was a consciousness that if he gave up to the rest and sank into the repose of insensibility it might be his last of life. This nerved him to struggle up, to stagger to his feet, ready for a further fight for life, but there was no need for further fight, the woman had fled. She fled at sight of the blood her own hands had drawn. Singleton sank into a chair

almost insensible and quite exhausted.

What can be more unnatural than hate between a man and a woman? especially between a man and a woman who have once loved? Think of it! The two sexes of no creatures on earth save the human ever engage in angry conflicts. Does this come from the fact that the male of no creature save the human ever attempts to govern, to cow and to subdue its female? Even the tiger is gentle to the tigress and the lion is loving to the lioness. The two sexes of every species of Mammalia save the human, live together amicably, if not lovingly; only male and female man present the painful, the disgraceful exception to the natural and universal law which holds the male and female half of the world friends if not lovers. What and where lies the cause of this exception? Does this disgraceful fact come from nature herself or from some social law imposed on the natural? Half the misery of life arises from the wranglings between men and women who have once been on loving terms. Men and women who have never loved never pursue each other vindictively, if they dislike or hate each other they are content quietly and coldly to keep apart, but where there has been love and the love has gone and hatred has taken its place, vindictive persecution begins. Philosophers and physicians, psychologists and law makers should study the phenomena of human hate, should search for its cause, though they go down to the very foundations of society to dig it up; though they uproot the very pillars of the social structure to find what wrong, what laws untrue to the natural bent and bias of the human heart, what customs directly contrary to the fundamental principles of the human being were, mixed in with the mortar which laid the foundations of our civilized society, which cemented every pillar on which rests the splendid superstructure.

Singleton heard feet coming up the stairway, the free, quick steps of youth, and the next minute the two handsome boys

54 BLACK AND WHITE.

thankward with all her might trying to threw him down burst into the room. They had opened the hall door with a night key and met the woman at the foot of the stairs; before they could recover from the astonishment so wild a figure caused blood-stained, bruised disheveled, as she was, she rushed past them out through the door into the street, the boys flew up

the stairs to their uncle's room.

Subduing his excitement as much as possible, Singleton direct-. ed the alarmed and much amazed boys what to do for his relief. They brought napkins and water to bathe his blood-stained face, they helped him off with his coat and gave him a glass of wine, and when he seemed sufficiently recovered, plied him with questions, the answers to which gave them to understand that a woman, crazed with drink, had assaulted him,—merely this and nothing more.

"Had you ever seen her before, Uncle?" asked the younger boy, Master Fred, "and do you think she had any particular

spite at you, Uncle?"

"Don't worry Uncle with questions, Fred," said the elder boy, who began to suspect there was something about the occurrence that made his uncle averse to speaking of it.

"I dare say the police can find her from uncle's description. "Describe her, uncle. I am going to the police station."

The boy began to draw on his overcoat, his uncle told him he need give himself no trouble, he should not inform on the wo-

"You don't wish her taken up?" asked the astonished younger boy, the elder boy was not so astonished, suspicions arose in

"I certainly will not put myself to any trouble," replied the

uncle, in a tone that indicated annoyance.

"But, uncle, you are too good natured, the woman is as dangerous as a wild-beast, she may come at you again. She may

kill somebody."

"I can look out for myself, Master Fred," replied his uncle, dryly. "I certainly do not intend to play detective for the policemen of this internal city. Let them hunt and catch their own criminals. You had better go to bed, boys. Good-night."

The two boys said "Good-night," and walked out, but the

younger was still much excited by the event.

"The woman ought to be shut up,—uncle is wrong to let her

off, if she had come after me in that way, I'd set every policeman in the city on her track. Uncle is too good-natured."

"Good nature, little brother," replied the other, with a look of boyish conceit, as he settled himself comfortably in an arm-chair, propping his feet on a table, "good-nature, little brother, bas nothing to do with the matter pathing whatever. has nothing to do with the matter, nothing whatever. Don't you smell a small-sized rat, my young friend?"

This knowing young gentleman lighted a cigar and put it be-

tween his boyish lips.

Master Fred stared in astonishment.

"A-what?" he asked.

"A rat—a small-sized rat. Why, I smelt it the very first minute I saw uncle all covered with blood—and the woman on the stairs' You may depend uncle wouldn't like to have that woman

up in court. Smell anything now, little brother?"

Master Jack who was sixteen—five years older than Master Fred, and whose ambition it was to be up to all tricks and ways of men, especially their tricks and ways with regard to what he considered manly sport, horses, dogs, dice, cards and women—inspired with this noble ambition, master Jack winked at his younger brother and looked in a knowing way, as he puffed out clouds of smoke through his boyish lips, now and then varying his enjoyment by swallowing the smoke and blowing it out through his nostrils.

Master Jack had been sent over to Europe to see the sights under his uncle's auspices—six months of that sort of schooling had immensely improved the young gentleman's knowledge of the polite world, as exhibited by gentlemen of that class to

which his uncle belonged.

"Smell anything now, little brother?" repeated Master Jack, with a provoking look, he seemed to be immensely amused

at the astonished and indignant face of Master Fred

"No, I don't," replied the latter, with angry emphasis, "and what is more, I don't believe you do, either, and what is still more, I don't believe there's any rat or any mouse, or even so much as a dead fly for anybody to smell; you are always trying to make a fellow think you're so confounded knowing, Jack. I've not the least speck of faith in your smells and your winks."

"Innocent little Fred!—unsophisticated little Fred!—baby-girl Fred!" cries the elder in that teasing tone he so well knew always irritated the boy. "Why, little brother, you haven't cut your eye teeth yet, your wisdom-teeth have'nt begun to sprout

in the bottom of your jaw-bone yet, my boy!"

He blew away the clouds of smoke and smiled satirically as

he saw the sullen look creep over his brother's brow.

The brothers had been separated for six months, the elder in Europe with his uncle, the younger at school in his own country and this was their first meeting, and the younger felt that Jack was returning very soon to his old disagreeable ways. Feeling thus, he sat gazing at the fire, Jack took a pack of cards from his pocket and began to shuffle and cut, after the manner of his uncle. It was the ruling ambition of Jack's soul to attain that manly dexterity in shuffling and cutting cards, which distinguished his uncle's friends across the water; for the accomplishment of this noble desire, master Jack always carried a pack of cards in his pocket, and practised every convenient moment.

"It's deuced lucky," said master Jack, glancing at the sullen face of his brother, "it's deuced lucky for you, Fred, that you've got a big brother who knows a thing or two and can put you through in this city and take care of you and show you the sights

until you get the hang of things yourself, and know the wires and the pins; -if you wern't looked after, Fred, the very horses in the wagons would mistake you for a perambulating bundle of grass and nibble at your verdant head. Now come-we'll have I'm not a bit sleepy."

Ordinarily Master Fred was willing enough to accept Jack's invitation to a game of cards, but knowing that play was the dearest delight of Jack's soul, he felt spiteful enough to refuse.

"You had better," urged Jack, "I know a new trick. I'll

teach you to do it."

Even this promise did not tempt master Fred, he again re-

fused.

"Why, what's come over you, Fred?" asked the other, astonished at this persistent resistance of the fascination of cards,

"have you been to prayer-meeting? Have you sworn off?" "No!" replied the younger boy, beginning to undress. haven't been to prayer-meeting, and I haven't sworn off, but I've made up my mind never to play with you again—you are too confoundedly aggravating."

"Aggravating? why what do you mean little brother?" asked the older boy, affecting innocence, "Haven't I taken you over the city? Haven't I shown you the sights? Didn't I take you to the theatre, and out sailing in the bay? Where's your gratitude, you exacting infant? What more can I do?"

"Confound your theatre! and confound your sailing! I guess

I could have gone by myself just as well as not. I'm not talking of theatres and boats, but rats and smells. What do you mean by telling a fellow that he hasn't cut his eye teeth? and his wisdom teeth have not begun to sprout? Yours haven't begun either. I heard Dr. Dental say that people do not cut their wisdom teeth until they are twenty or twenty-four and you are only sixteen. That's only four years ahead of me."

"Hold your temper, Fred," returned the elder boy, with a good-natured, conceited air peculiarly offensive to his compan-ion. He was still busy shuffling the cards. "I was only speaking metaphorically, little brother; you know what metaphor is Haven't you got into the Rhetoric class yet? Of course at your age, Fred, the mental nose, if I may be allowed the expression, is not as quick at detecting the propinquity of the

moral rat as—as a man's—ahem!"

Master Fred looked at this man of sixteen with open scorn. "If I am an infant at twelve," he said, "pray, sir, what are you at sixteen? just in your first breeches, I should say, and there's precious little difference between a baby in his long cloths and a

baby in his first breeches."

"Never mind, Fred," said the elder, still with a good-natured air of superiority. "Never mind, my boy, each day brings you nearer and nearer to the age when your mental olfactories will smell out the the moral rats, when there are any to smell, as I am pretty sure there are in this case."

"What do you mean by 'this case?" "demanded Master Fred

with boyish impatience.

"What do I mean? Why didn't you see that for some reason or other Uncle did not want that woman taken up by the police?"

"What reason can he have?" asked Master Fred, with wide-

open eyes.

"Ah!" returned the knowing Jack with a wise look. "That's exactly what I'd like to know myself. You see, Fred, between you and me and the fireplace, I know a thing or two about Uncle. O! he's one of the larks you hear tell of! a Don Juan of a fellow. I saw him—I watched him on the ship as we came over. Confound me! if there weren't half a dozen women dead in love with him all at the same time, and confound me! if a fellow could tell which of 'em he liked best. By George! I found out he didn't care a row of pins for a single one of 'em! He's sly, Fred, he's the slyest fellow I know of, and he has a way of looking at a woman as if he was just ready to fall down at her feet; and it's all the same, even if he thinks she's a regular dowdy all the same, too."

"You don't mean to say," asked the boy, with an indignant face, "that Uncle Arthur ever made love to such a creature as

that we saw coming down the stair steps?"

Master Jack laughed knowingly and satirically as he turned up the ace of spades for trump and then dealt the cards to imag-

inary partners.

"Now Fred," he said, with a generous air of superior wisdom, "that's what I call innocent; that's juvenile. Don't you know women don't begin at the bottom of the social ladder? Don't you know they generally get knocked down there, or else they slide down more or less fast? Don't you know, little brother, it's quite likely that horrible hag we saw on the stair was once a nice, pretty-looking girl, fresh as a flower? The mischief with women," continued our young philosopher, once more shuffling the cards and once more making deals to imaginary partners, "the mischief is they all stand—the whole sex you may say stand in the most ticklish position on the tip-top of an inclined plane, and a confoundedly steep incline it is, and while the dear creatures keep up on that tip-top place we men take off our hats and make 'em polite bows, all the time doing our level best to coax 'em down from the tip-top pinacle—the apex you may call it—of respectability. We hold out a little money to 'em if they're poor, and they mostly are poor, for you see we men hold the purse in this free and equal land, and by George! Fred, after we've got 'em to come ever so little way down that steeply-inclined plane, we never let 'em go back. No, by George! we fix it so they can't get back. We won't let the others who are yet holding on by tooth and toe-nails to the tip-top pinnacle of respectability, take 'em back. Not we. We just draw such a deep line between the tip-toppers and the sliders down, we never

let 'em get together again. In this way, Fred, my sonny, we men always have on hand a class of women, who, to all intents and purposes, belong to us, just as much as the slave blacks in the South belong to their masters. In fact, more so, for there's no law to make us keep and care for these sliding-downers, after they get old and ugly. We just kick 'em out to sink or swim, and by George! they're sure to sink, for there's nothing they can take hold of after we've done with 'em.''

The younger boy stared but said never a word; the elder, tired of shuffling cards, put the pack in his pocket, propped his feet again on the table, lighted another cigar, and went on with his

instructive philosophy.

"Now, we men," continued the moralizer, blowing graceful clouds through his handsome nose, "we men may slide plumb down to the bottom of all the social ladders ever built, and we can climb up again if we choose, and are just as well received by the woman tip-toppers as if we never had slid down. In fact, we may jump down or roll down in a drunken spree, and when we are tired of the bottom mire, we can pick ourselves up, shake ourselves free of the outside dirt, climb right up and all the women tip-toppers will hold out their hands and help us up. That's the difference between a man and a woman, Fred."

The young moralizer puffed out clouds of smoke and watched them float away in a complacent, comfortable frame of mind.

"Bully for us!" exclaimed master Fred, after taking in the full meaning of the discourse. It was the first time the boy had a realizing sense of the immense advantages enjoyed by the sex to which he belonged, which so elated his boyish heart, it quite banished the ill-temper in which he had indulged.

"But I say, Jack," he cried, his eyes sparkling brightly, "what's the reason the women can't get out of the mire as well

as us men?"

"We men won't let 'em,' said Master Jack, sententiously, removing his cigar to speak.

"Yes, I know; but why won't we let 'em?"

Now, this was a problem which the astute master Jack had never tackled, yet he did not like to show his ignorance. It was a principle with Jack never to admit to his brother that there

was any question he could not clearly explain.

"Well, you see, Fred, you are most too young to understand," began the elder boy with a wise look, "there are a good many reasons, bubby, why women can't ever get up when once they're run down; and there are a good many reasons why we men won't let 'em get up. First and foremost, they're not men, they are only women. That's the strongest reason. Then another reason is, there's no use in a woman turning good after she's gone to the bad. Who wants anything to do with such a woman? Not men, of course. You see there are always plenty of nice fresh women for us to look after. What's the use of getting the old bad ones mended up? We'd rather have

the new ones. So, you see after a woman's gone and made a high old dissipated dandelion of herself like that creature that was here to-night, she's no more business on this earth, and the sooner she hands in her tickets and takes herself to the regions beyond, the better. Now, we men may sow wild oats and tame oats, but a woman—of course, you see, bubb, eh? A woman can't come back to tame oats after she's run after the wild.'

"Y-e-s," replied the boy, a little dubiously, as if not exactly understanding the whole of this vast subject quite as clearly as its

young expounder.

"Now a man," resumed handsome Jack, puffing out clouds of smoke,—"a man, you see, little bub, when a man's tired of sowing wild oats, he can always go at something else, but what can a woman go at?"

"Some sort of work?" suggested the younger brother.

"No, not at all. That wouldn't do. The chief work of women is to please men. Every man knows that. Well, these mended-up women can't please us, because we prefer the fresh ones, and we can't permit 'em to mingle with nice women. They might tell on us, and set the nice women against us. Thus you see, we men are forced to draw a deep line between the nice, fresh women and the women we've—ruined. Don't you see?"

"Y-e-s," hesitatingly assented the boy, his mental faculties striving to grasp the whole grand theory, or masculine policy toward the female half of the world. After some reflection, the whole sublime scheme burst upon his mind and lighted up his

young face. His eyes sparkled with triumphant joy.

"Wouldn't I hate to be a woman!" he exclaimed, "O, wouldn't I!"

Jumping up, he went to the dressing table, got the hand-mirror, came back, sat down and began closely to inspect his young face to see if there were any visible signs of that hirsute growth which is the badge and insignia of American sovereignity.

"Hate-to-to-be-a-woman?" repeated Master Jack, gazing meditatively through the clouds about him. "I should say so! One

might as well be a dog and done with it as be a woman!"

"Better, I should say," muttered the younger boy, passing his forefinger delicately over his upper lip, in the hope of feeling the growth his eye could not discern. Was it irritation caused by disappointment at not detecting by sight or touch any sign of that growth which would proclaim him a member of the master class that made the boy pettishly exclaim that he did not see much use for women anyway.

The elder boy complacently replied:

"We men find 'em useful now and then—not as companions, though," he hastened to explain. "They're poor company—not worth a cent as company—don't know the world; and as for cards—uncle says some women in Europe play cards, but American women are not sharp enough. Still, when there's no real business on hand, we men like to be amused by 'em sometimes

when they're young and pretty. Uncle says Turkey's the country for men to live in. Here you see a man has to practice ettiquette and all that with ladies, wait on 'em to public places, fan 'em; pick up their hankerchiefs when they choose to drop 'em, give up seats to 'em, etc., etc., which is a confounded bore to a fellow. Now, in Turkey, women never go out in company with men. They're shut up in harems. It isn't the etiquette for a man to talk of women. We are not supposed to know of their existence. They are kept in the background, just as in this country, in polite society, we are not supposed to know of the existence of such creatures as the one we met on the steps tonight. Don't you see, little bub?'

It will be perceived that this young gentleman had made good use of his time during the six months he was in Europe under

the tutorage of his uncle.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE THREE STUDENTS.

On that same Christmas eve, in the same city, and about the same hour of night, three young medical students were met together in social confab. They met in the rooms of two of the number, said rooms being in that large brick "bodin' house," to which Dolly had referred as once having served as a boarding-house for the young ladies attending the Finisher Institute, before that Institute had enlarged its capacities to lodge its own

pupils.

These students were fast friends, although of widely differing tastes and opinions and from widely separated States. Charles Edward Charlmonte was from South Carolina; Richard Wilmer from the State of New York; Calvin Calyx from Canaan-four-Corners, a small village in New England. Charlmonte was the only son of a wealthy South Carolina planter, whose home was on one of those beautiful Islands lying off the coast of the main land, famous for the production of fine sea-island cotton. Wilmer was one of a large family of very limited means. Calyx was almost penniless, had not money enough to finish his course of study, and was daily and nightly turning over in his mind, schemes whereby he could earn enough to put him through college and enable him to start out in life with a diploma, authorizing him to kill or cure the sick. Charlmonte never expected to practice medicine, the study of it was merely a part of his education. In the South it was not unusual for the master and the mistress of large numbers of slaves, to acquire some knowledge of diseases and their treatment. Although it was the custom to employ physicians by the year to attend to the negroes, still so numerous were their fancies, so strong their faith in "'conjurers," in "charms," in "side-stitches," and other mysterious ailments, to each of which it was absolutely necessary to

give due sympathy and attention, that it was generally deemed advisable for the master or the mistress to be able to give sensible advice and harmless prescriptions when the medical man was not on hand.

Calyx sat by a small table on which was a small heap of small bones, he was putting them together in the shape of a human hand. Wilmer was drawing mournful notes from his fiddle, although the most cheerful in nature, he was fond of the saddest music. Charlmonte was reading: without looking up from the page, he cried out,

"Stop your scraping, Wilmer, I wan't to read you some lines which you and Calyx will like, for their argument, but which I

think abominable.

Wilmer stopped, his bow still in the air, and glanced at his

companion's book.

"Go on," he said, "I see you have the greatest poet, living or dead—perhaps with one or two exceptions."

"If the greatest, also the worst," said the Southerner. Wilmer laughed, "Oh! 'he cried, tossing his fiddle and bow on the bed and squaring himself for a discussion, discussions were his dearest delight-"I see you have been reading the 'Scotch Reviewers.' Such a lot of Puritan nonsense as they do talk about, the 'danger' and the 'evil,' and all that, is absurd, and the world will recognize it as merest trash in a few years."

"Well, hear this, and even you will admit there is no good done

by such writing."

"Go on."

Charlmonte read aloud:

"Life! Toil! And wherefore should I toil?"

"Wherefore, indeed," interrupted the young man with the bones, "if in the creation of life the principle of benevolence had any part? Toil and poverty make the misery of humanity."

"Toil and poverty bring all the blessings we have," said Wilmer.
"Withhold your comments, both of you, until you have the

text," said the reader.

"And wherefore should I toil because My father could not keep his place in Eden? What had I done in this?—"

"Pertinent query," remarked the cynic with the bones. The reader continued:

"I was unborn,
I sought not to be born, nor love the state
To which that birth hath brought me. Why did he
Yield to the serpent and the woman? Or,
Yielding, why suffer? What was there in this?
The tree was planted, and why not for him?
If not, why place him near it, where it grew
The fairest in the center? They have but
One answer to all questions, 'Twas His will,
And He is good. How know I that? Because
He is all-powerful must all-good too follow?
I judge but by the fruits, and they are bitter." I judge but by the fruits, and they are bitter."

"Bitter indeed," muttered the student with the bones, the

cynical solemnity of age in his voice and eyes.

"Now, according to my views," began the young Southerner, "this whole poem is objectionable because it is in the questioning vein. Such questions do no earthly good, and serve to un-

settle faith, as the 'Scotch Reviewer' says." "'Unsettle faith!' Why should not faith be unsettled?" cried the disputatious Wilmer, tossing back his brown hair and turning up the cuffs of his shirt, as if preparing for a combat. "Can you give one single good reason why faith should not be unsettled? I can give you a dozen, all going to prove how beneficial it is to humanity, at longer or shorter intervals, to shake up human faiths, turn them topsy-turvy, and critically look them over, discarding such features as the wisest among us have outgrown. People who progress in knowledge outgrow old faiths, as they do old clothes. They need newer ideas to suit their larger mentality. If that poem shakes old faiths, let 'em shake. It could not possibly do a better work. I hope it will keep on shaking until it cracks the hard strata of superstition, lets in the light of reason, and whirls about the unsound old dogmas until they're pulverized to crumbs and blown away out of sight, and purer and truer ones take their place. Poems, like Cain, are prophetic."

"Of what, pray?"

"Poets are the forerunners of logicians—poetry precedes science—genius pierces to truth, logicians dig it out," said Wilmer

oracularly.

"Milton, for instance," suggested the cynical Calyx. "I would like you, Wilmer, to mention one grand truth that Milton's poetic genius pierced through error to discover and show to the world. His picture of rebellion in Heaven, and the tumble-down of the rebels into Hell, may be good poetry—I don't like it, but I will not deny the poetry—but where is the truth? How old, old, and trite is the story! On one side the effort to rule, on the other, the effort to resist. Tyranny on one side, yearning for freedom on the other. The struggles between these two principles have reddened the earth with blood, and made more misery than any other one thing on earth. For my part, I always sympathize with the side that struggles for freedom—the rebel side."

Charlmonte said he sympathized with the law-and-order side, he thought that Milton's "Paradise Lost" teaches a grand moral. The angels fell because unwilling to submit to the government

"That," said Calyx, "is from the victor's standpoint. Wait

until you hear the story from the conquered side."

"Hitherto," said Wilmer, "poets, even the greatest, have not shown much power of reason, they have usually accepted the superstition, whether religious or political, of the times they lived in. Homer, Virgil, Dryden, Dante, Milton,

Shakspeare, are examples of this fact. All of these had poetic power far beyond their contemporaries, but no better reasoning faculties. They all accepted the theological and political dogmas of the day, without a dissent. Byron and Shelley make a break in that bad rule. In their minds were gathered and concentrated all the wide-thinking skepticism which was scattered and diffused through the mentality of the age in which they lived, their genius reproduced that daring thought in a concrete form, clear-cut and luminous as diamonds. Both were of the aristocratic class, yet both were democrats in principle, both hated human bondage, and loved human freedom. Byron's scorn for the monarch of England was the principle cause of his unpopularity. Shelley's scorn for the unjust laws of England was the cause of the persecution that pursued him. Poems like "Cain," "Queen Mab," and "The Irish Avator," are prophetic of the time when Poesie and Reason, like lovers, will walk hand in hand over the earth, strewing flowers and facts in their path."

Wilmer went to a shelf and took down a bound volume of En-

glish magazines. Finding what he wanted, he said,

"Listen to what the Scotch fellow said of 'Cain' when it first came out. See how aghast the Scotch Presbyterian mind was before the genius which so dazzled their vision, they were forced to clap their hands before their eyes and cry out with pain. Eyes unaccustomed to the searching sun-light of reason, are blinded and pained by its sudden flashes. And those Scotch fellows whose brains were bound with Calvanistic ligatures, really were scared, at first, angrily, then whiningly, called on the poet to cease his daring flights—to cease darting flashes of light on their darkened visions, agitating and alarming their indolent repose in Old Superstition's temple."

"O, come!" cried Charlmonte laughing, "Hold in your Pegasus, Wilmer, or you'll get a fall. Read the passage, and let us

judge for ourselves."

"All right—here goes:

'He (meaning the poet) is a volcano in the heart of our land, and a cloud that hangs over our dwellings—'"

"'Volcano,' and 'cloud,' " criticised the Southerner. Is that Jeffrey?"

"Yes, Jefirey himself. Rather reckless in similes. Reviewers do not expect to be reviewed, and so feel free to commit any literary crime—

'He (again meaning the poet) voluntarily darkens and influences our atmosphere with perpetual fiery explosions and pitchy vapors—'"

"In my opinion, a very true criticism," interrupted the Southerner.

Of course," replied the reader, always ready to fire back, "and Cain" is one of the pitchiest and most fiery. No wonder it made

the true-blue Scotch Presbyterians cry out in affright. A little further on and Jeffrey talks excitedly of the poet's 'lurid light,' and 'baneful influence,' and other powers of a Satanic nature. The light may be lurid, but it served to show the cracks and crevices in the old tumble-down theological temple to those who try to think, or those who really do think it a perfect structure. Men have lived so long in theological shadows, their organs of

vision are weakened, strong light gives pain."

"You admit the pain," replied the gentle Southerner, "how then, can you justify or defend the poet, who causes the pain? Is it kind to inflict pain on harmless fellow creatures?—needless pain? If pious minds are happy in the faith and do not see the cracks, as you call them, in the theological temple in which they worship, is it not a ruthless work to give them pain by shaking and unsettling their faith? Admit that the poet is right—not that I think he is right—but you may admit, for the sake of the argument, that he has the logic, that believers are in error, would not ordinary kindness, ordinary benevolence, forbid those flashes of light which unsettle faith and cause thereby great pain?"

"The surgeon that sets a broken limb gives the subject great pain. Shall he let that limb grow crooked and the patient go lame all his life, rather than cause him pain?" was Wilmer's

"The cases are not similar," returned the Southerner. The subject in your case would undoubtedly suffer more pain by not having his leg properly set. I see no similitude in your illus-

tration."

"Wait until I am through. The schoolmaster who forces his pupils to study, gives pain for the time. The pupils would enjoy games and sports far more than study, yet we must admit that a substantial benefit accrues to the pupil from the pain of coercion to which he is subjected. The poet, whose genius pierces to the truth, by the flashes of that genius, forces the bigot to reason. The force causes some pain, just as the schoolmaster's coercion forces the pupil to the pain of study; but benefit is bound to come, if not to-day—if not to the bigots of the day, the next generation will feel the influence. Each generation gains by the sufferings of the past. But to return to the 'Scotch Reviewers'—Jeffrey says:

'It (Cain) will give great offense to pious minds, and may be the means of suggesting the most painful doubts to hundreds of minds that otherwise might never have been exposed to such dangerous disturbance.

"A very true observation," said the Southerner.
"True enough, doubtless, but I utterly deny the inference that Jeffrey; draws, viz: that such disturbances are dangerous and injurious to humanity. You cannot deny, Charlmonte-no reflecting man can deny, that doubt is at the bottom of all progress. What is doubt but a dissatisfaction with what is, and a desire for something better? That desire leads to the search

after the better. Doubt stimulates the human mind and leads it to investigation-leads to truth. Had no doubt ever agitated the minds of men, where now would be the race? Would we be one whit above the natives of Australia? Yet this time-serving Scotch reviewer reviles this action of the mind, and has the assurance to advise and admonish a God-ordained preacher of Truth—a poet is a God-made preacher and teacher—and because the poet does not act on Jeffrey's time-serving advice, he scolds and berates after this fashion. Hear him:

'Never was an author so gently admonished, so kindly entreated to look more heedfully after his opinions."

Think of it! The impudence of any ordinary man admonishing a God-made poet! Think of it! The arrogance of a mere reviewer—a man of the time and place—undertaking to curb and control the genius that belonged to all time and all places! But, putting out of sight the difference between the power of the two men, suppose they were on precisely the same mental plane, why should the one undertake to admonish the other to look to his opinions? What assurance had the one more than the other that his opinions were true and the other's false? Has any man on earth the right to dictate to another what he shall or shall not think ?"

"Jeffrey never claimed the right to dictate to Byron what he

should think," said the Southerner.

"He claimed the right to dictate to the poet how he should express his thought, and that is the same thing. Jeffrey undertook to admonish and direct the great poet how and what to write. Can impudence be more monstrous? And then, because the poet does not take his advice—does not write as Jeffrey thinks, and not after his own inspiration, Jeffrey makes loud complaint. Listen to what this assuming gentleman says:

"We are not bigots. We have not been detractors from Lord Byron's fame, nor the friends of his detractors, and we tell him, far more in sorrow than in anger.'

And then Jeffrey goes on to tell the poet he must cease to write as his genius impels, and must write to suit the notions of the public! In all the history of literature I know of nothing more impudent and impertinent than this."

"I do not see it in that light," said the Southerner. Surely a man cannot be called impertinent for expressing his opinions as to the moral or immoral tendencies of a poem, or any literary work. I consider that Jeffrey would have been recreant to his duty as a reviewer had he not done so, freely and frankly."

"Have I ever denied that? Did you understand me to say that I blamed Jeffrey for thinking and saying that Byron's poems

were of an immoral and dangerous tendency?"

"I certainly did."

"Then I have made myself illy understood. I admit that you are right when you declare that it was Jeffrey's duty to write

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and publish his true opinions. That I could never object to. Jeffrey had a right to warn people against the poems, if he considered them injurious, but he had no right to admonish the poet, as if he—Jeffrey—were the superior being; he had no right to reproach the poet for not taking his admonition and advice—for not ceasing to write after the dictates of his own genius—and not writing to suit the people's ideas. Had Byron obeyed Jeffrey's admonition and toned the fire of his soul to suit the bigots of the time, it would have been a base prostitution of his own genius. I rejoice that he paid no heed to Jeffrey's or any other person's impertinent advice."

"I differ from you there, Wilmer," said the Southerner. "Byron could have respected his contemporaries without crippling his genius. It is not the duty of a poet to attack the religious

opinions of his age and country."

"Ah!" returned the disputatious young fellow, with a look that seemed to say, "Now I have thee on the hip." "That is your opinion, and was Jeffrey's and the great body of the English people's—what then? Must a man give up his opinions because he is in the minority? Minorities are more apt to be right than majorities. All history proves this. The great majority of Jesus' contemporaries were opposed to his divine truths and wanted to force him to their idea, and not according to his own inspiration. Socrates was in the minority. All teachers of truths new to the ignorant masses, are in woeful minority. Jeffrey here takes great credit to himself because he had not been as loudly abusive as others. Listen:

'We have been no detractors; he (Byron) has no priest-like cant, or priest-like reviling to apprehend from us, and we do not charge him with being the apostle of Satan, and we testify that his poems abound with sentiments of great dignity and tenderness as well as infinite sublimity and beauty; but the general tendency we believe to be in the highest degree pernicious.'

What is this but detraction?"

"Surely," cried the Southerner, "you can not blame a man for saying he thinks a thing is pernicious, if he does think it?"

for saying he thinks a thing is pernicious, if he does think it?" "Of course not. I do not blame Jeffrey or any other reviewer for saying Bryon's works are pernicious. That is a right every one has. What I do blame him for is that he attempted to bully Byron into writing to suit the notions of those who did not like his writings, and was eternally and very impertinently admonishing and entreating him to change his style. What is more arrogant than this:

"We believe (we, the Edinburg Reviewer), that his writings are in the highest degree pernicious,"

As much as to say:

"That ought to settle the question, my Lord Poet, that ought to bring you down to your marrow-bones, and make you beg pardon for your past poems and put out your future poems after the true-blue pious Scotch Presbyterian style."

that are as still and stagnant as a pool over which no breeze eve-Now, I affirm, it not only showed stupendous, but asinine arrogance to fancy that his 'We believe' would or should weigh with

the poet one atom."

"Jeffrey's arrogance," said the student who was engaged with the bones (the skeleton hand was almost completed) "was but a part of that wide-spread intolerance which pervaded the whole British community. A little reflection might have suggested to Jeffrey that it was barely possible the poet was right, and he and the British public were wrong, and that he, Jeffrey, and the British public had no moral or legal right to dictate to the

poet."

"Exactly my views, Calyx," said Wilmer, well pleased at receiving so capable an ally. "It is evident to any unprejudiced mind that if the poet had believed, as no doubt he did, that the general tendency of his works was not only not pernicious, but was elevating and purifying, he not only had the moral right to continue to write and publish his own thoughts, but it was his bounden duty to do so. I think it very likely that Byron thought that the general tendency of Jeffrey's ideas were pernicious, yet he was not so arrogant as to thrust his admonitions on the Reviewer. Listen to this, and see if it is not detraction:

"'How opposite to Byron is the system and the temper of the great author of Waverly, the only living individual to whom Lord Byron must submit to be ranked as inferior in genius—still more deplorable inferior in all that makes genius amiable in itself and useful to society."

"That," said the Southerner, "I call a just and true compari-

son—not detraction."

"At any rate," replied Wilmer, "it is an opinion that I would stake my head, will not stand the test of time. I predict that Byron will be read long after Scott is forgotten, or laid on the shelf, out of fashion, as Richardson's novels are out of fashion now."

"Nine men out of ten," replied the Southerner, "will agree with me that Scott was a greater genius than Byron, and even the tenth man will admit that Scott's writings are far more ben-

eficial to humanity."

"That tenth man would not be me," returned Wilmer. "I believe that Byron's thoughts will exert a better influence on humanity than those of any writer of this age."

"A most extraordinary belief."

"Will you let me demonstrate it?"

"If you can."

"You will not deny" began Wilmer, "you will admit, that the exercise of the thinking, the reasoning faculties, is beneficial

Charlmonte admitted the proposition after a moment's hesi-

tation. "Very well," said Wilmer. "Your objection to Byron, and Jeffrey's objection, is that his works unsettle faith and awaken doubts in the minds of those who are free from doubts-minds

that are as still and stagnant as a pool over which no breeze ever blows. If activity of mind is better than stagnation, it follows that anything which arouses it to activity is beneficial. There can be no progress without agitation. Doubts turned pious Pagans into pious Christians. Christianity, even infidels must admit, is better than Paganism. Doubts caused the break of the Protestants from the Catholic church. You will not deny that Protestantism is better than Romanism. Doubts as to the truth of the prevailing form of religion spurred on Martin Luther."

"The old rascal!" muttered Calyx, as he put the finishing

touch to the skeleton hand.

"Rascal or not. Luther did a good and great work for humanity. He gave old Superstition a blow from which it has never recovered. Was it not well for us that Luther's faith was shaken—bis piety pained by doubt? Thus, you see, if Christianity is better than Paganism, if Protestantism is better than Romanism, we owe the improvements to the doubts which unsettled faiths learned in childhood Destroy doubt and the world will stand still. Doubt drives minds on in search of Truth. They may never reach that infinite Good, but may forever approach it."

At this moment, a pounding at the door turned their attention. Wilmer opened it. A blast of bitter cold air came in and with it a woman. The young students stared. She was a pitiable spectacle to look at, her hair disordered, her eyes wild and wretched, her face bruised, the bosom of her dress blood-stained, her skirts muddied and torn. The struggle with Singleton had not improved her appearance. She looked around dazed and dazzled by the light. Charlmonte, who never forgot his graceful courtesy of manner, placed a chair by the fire and politely invited her to be seated. She had a hunted, anguished, but defiant look, the snowflakes on her skirts melted and streamed down on the floor. With kind courtesy, Charlmonte inquired what they could do to serve her?

"Which of you," she asked, looking from one to the other, is the doctor who believes there is no devil and no hell?"

Had a thunderbolt fallen, the young men could have been no more astonished. Was a creature like this going into a polemical discussion?

"What do you wish to know?" asked Wilmer.

The woman briefly stated that she was tired of life, that she wanted enough poison to end it, that she was able to pay for it and wanted a deadly dose, she had been fooled once, she did not wish to be fooled again. She produced from her pocket the little locket set with seed pearls and asked if it would not buy enough poison to settle her.

Wilmer looked at the picture in the locket and then at the woman; he passed it to Charlmonte who also looked from the picture to the woman. Charlmonte passed it to Calyx, he also looked from the picture to the woman.

"It is mine—it is mine," said the woman misconstruing their

actions, "it is not stolen—it belongs to me."

"We see that it is yours in more senses than one," said Calyx, coming forward in front of the woman and looking intently at her, "you are the original; the picture is yours. How long since this was painted?"

The question stirred in her heart a mad mutiny of memories, she jumped up and started toward the door, Wilmer stood before

it; she rushed back:

"How long? a thousand years—a thousand—thousand years!" "As this is your picture," said Calyx, "and it has been painted a thousand years, you must be just one thousand and

sixteen years old,"

"What do you want? What do you mean to do?" she cried glaring at him. "Give me the stuff and let me go." "It is cruel," said the Southerner, "to trifle with her misery.

Let us do what we can for her and let her go."

Charlmonte took out his purse. What could be done for a creature in her condition, but to fling her a little money and get

her out of sight?

Calyx put his hand on the woman's shoulders and gently bade her to sit down, there was plenty of time for the poison business, that could be got over in five minutes with the right sort of The woman yielded to the student and sat again by the drug. fire.

"You must see," said Calyx, fixing her with his magnetic eyes, "you must see it is necessary that we should know

something more of you before we give you the poison."

"What is the use, Calyx?" asked Charlmonte, distressed "You see she is in no condition to answer. May I ask your ac-

ceptance of this

He laid a few pieces of gold on her lap, she drew back her head and hands, a wild horror in her eyes and shook them from her dress as if they had been serpents. They rolled and rattled on the floor.

"Thay have turned to adders," she muttered, in a hoarse whisper, glaring at them with strained eye-balls, "yellow adders

that sting and poison."

After a minute she looked up at the three young faces before her.

"I did not ask you for gold—I want no gold. Do the dead need gold? Give me the stuff I want, and let me go-go-go!"

Calyx wrote a few lines on a scrap of paper and passed it to the other two, they nodded in assent. The lines stated that the woman seemed to be on the verge of mania-a-potu, that a police station was on his way home, that he, Calyx, would take her with him,—she needed to be in a hospital. Wilmer proffered to accompany him, Calyx refused, there was no need, he said, he could easily manage the patient—he had been studying certain works on Mesmerism in the Indies, and felt himself quite a proficient

in the practice of that singular power. Fixing the woman with his eyes, he bade her follow him,—said he would give her what she needed. The door was opened, the cold was so sharp, and the woman so inadequately dressed, Charlmonte seized a large traveling shawl that lay on the foot of the bed, threw it over the woman's head as she started out.

"Had I not better go with you, old fellow?" offered Wilmer.

"No, really there's no need. Good-night."

The two disappeared in the darkness of the street.

"What an odd fellow Calyx is!" said Wilmer, heaping fuel on the fire.

"We should have gone with him," said Charlmonte.

"But he really did not wish any company—I saw that. For some reason he wished to go by himself."

"But I can see no possible reason."

"Nor I—yet I know he had one. If you'll notice he never asks us to visit him. I dare say his lodging is nothing to boast of, as if we cared for that! My poverty never troubles me! I know I shall have a long and a hard fight to overcome it, but all life is a fight, anyhow; the most of us fight for bread, some for position, some for health, no one is satisfied with what is, every one is striving to attain something he has not. Life is strife—so what odds whether the strife is to overcome poverty, or any other obstacle? Good-night, old fellow, I'm off."

Wilmer rolled into bed and sank to sleep. Charlmonte fol-

lowed.

CHAPTER IX.

DOLLY'S MIND BECOMES CURIOUS ON A PHILOLOGICAL QUESTION.

While the young ladies of the Finisher Institute were listening to Miss Mark Anthony, Miss Charlmonte, the negress, the Gaff children, Pat and the box, were making their way through the snow-covered streets to the Gaff's lodging. The Southern girl was as fleet of foot as a deer, the negress swift, Dolly clutched two little hands and bore their owners along. They had not far to go. When they hove in sight of the little grocery store kept by Mrs. Flood, in which a light was burning, Dolly sung out cheerfully, "Dar hit!"—not meaning that the grocery was "hit," but "hit," that is, the place they were seeking was across the street from the lighted grocery. The next instant she came to a sudden halt and cried out "Dis hit!"

They were before the door of a two story tenement, not a light

was to be seen in it.

"Jes stan' stock an' stone still, Miss Roma," said Dolly, fumbling in her pocket for a key, "till I gits de do' open an' lights a candle, you see my room, Miss Roma, is de fustes one on de fustes flo'."

The door opened and Dolly dived into the dense darkness, and pretty soon emerged with a tallow candle, which served to show the way up a narrow stairway. Dolly took the lead, calling on the others to follow. On the landing, moans from some dark recess were heard, they moved to the sounds and found themselves in the Gaff apartment. There was neither light or fire, but the candle in Dolly's hand showed the destitution and poverty of the place. The woman Gaff, was in a wretched bed, covered by a poor quilt, she had been cruelly beaten, bruised and her ribs broken by her drunken husband. The law had taken the husband off, locked him up, and left her to starve or perish with cold.

"She had a comfble bed onst," said Dolly, "but dat bed's done drunk up long ago, an' de cheers too, I don't see nary

cheer to offer de lady to set on."

"Never mind the chair," said Miss Charlmonte, "what we first

want, Dolly, is a fire, we must have a fire."

"Der ain't de fust grain o' coal as I ken see," returned Dolly, looking around, then she offered to fetch a bucket full from her room and start a fire in the stove. The room was small and Miss Charlmonte soon had the satisfaction of seeing the stove red hot, and an agreeable warmth pervaded the apartment.

Pat opened the box, the woman was fed and a doctor sent for to look after her broken bones. Dolly's blankets were borrowed on the promise of "bran new ones," from Miss Charlmonte. The tired children, covered up warmly, fell into a delightful sleep. Dolly said she would keep the fire up all night, and "jes qurl up

in a blanket behin' de stove an' sleep till mornin'.''
After these arrangements and the doctor had attended to the woman's bones, (he said she would be about before many days), Miss Charlmonte prepared to return to the Institute. Something in Dolly's eyes arrested her steps—it was a speaking hunger, such as one sees in a dog's eyes when he is hungry and watching his master eat.

Why, dear old Dolly," said the girl, going to work to slice turkey and bread, as well as she could with the dull horn-handled knife, the best the Gaff establishment afforded, "here you have been running all night in the cold, tiring yourself out, and haven't yet tasted a bite of the ole Island turkey!—Aunt Rachel's

cookery too."

Dolly took the proffered food with a beaming face. "Lors, honey!" she said, "I ain't one bit hungry! nary bit! I eat a mos' monstus big, bustin' supper o' sassages an' fried homly jes fo' I went to prar meetin. I ain't a bit hungry, but sister Rachel's cookin is monsus temptin', sho! I'll jes tek a bite for sister Rachel's sake."

Dolly and Rachel were church sisters.

Left alone with the Gaffs, Dolly ate with intense relish; the children and their mother were fast asleep. Dolly busied herself, taking the things from the box and arranging them around the huge turkey which was on the table; that done, the delightful warmth diffused a happy contentment over Dolly's mind and body, she felt easy about the condition of the one she called the "born lady," having no doubt but that the rich, handsome gentleman in whose carriage the born lady had sailed off, had provided for her comfort. Filled with these pleasant reflections, Dolly "qurled" herself up in a blanket behind the hot stove and dozed happily. From the open stove door, a ruddy light made the scene cheerful, but the negress was not destined to an uninterrupted rest during the remainder of the night. She pricked up her ears at the sound of heavy steps coming up the stairs. Two pairs of feet made the steps.

"Who dem dis time o' night?" said Dolly, her heart giving a bound; visions of policemen haunted her brain, having regained her freedom without a trial, she feared she might be pursued and taken back. The heavy feet came along the narrow hall and stopped at the Gaff door. With ears pricked forward, mouth open, and eyes staring in terror, Dolly listened; there was no lock on the door, she knew it could be pushed open with a

touch,

"A confounded good smell comes from this room," said a deep masculine voice on the other side of the door.

"There's nothing good in there," replied another voice,

"they're a lot of poor devils, starving I guess."

Dolly recognized this last voice as belonging to a lodger in the next room, a dissipated locksmith, who worked when sober and half starved when his sprees were over before he again found em-

ployment.

"I'll trust my nose and bet on its testimony," said the coarser voice. The door opened and a head was put in, then the body followed; a broad shouldered six-foot fellow with a heavy black beard. When Dolly saw he was no policeman her fears vanished; she was angry at the intrusion. Both men came in; the big six-foot man looked around with astonishment. The poverty of the room, the luxury of the edibles on the table, lighted up by the ruddy glow of the fire, were certainly in striking contrast. The two men stared, they did not see the turbaned head and the phosphorescent eyes watching them from behind the stove like a beast in its lair.

"What the H—l!" muttered the big six-foot fellow, making a move toward the table, "I'll be hanged, Carson, if this isn't

enough to tempt a hungry man and I'm most starved."

Quick as a black panther and almost as fierce the negress sprung from her lair to the defense of the food. Planting herself in front of the table she faced the hungry eyes of the intruders, her own darting flames, her lean body swaying from side to side, her claw-like hands waving to and fro, the fingers opening and contracting with the instinct to tear. The big man broke into a laugh; it struck him as a funny joke that a stringy, witchy looking ne gress, whom he could floor with a back-handed blow, should se

herself up against him. This gentleman was a Southerner and through and through was permeated with the idea of the immense superiority of the white race and the immeasurable inferiority of the black. That there is a difference few will dispute, still that difference is not immeasurable.

"What the deuce!" he cried, after his laugh, "do you keep

black panthers about you, Carson?"

"I'd most as soon get a panther's claws stuck on me as hers," replied Carson. "You'd as well come along; you'll get no good here."

"I'm starved, man, and it tempts a fellow," said the big man,

looking hungrily at the food.

"You keep off!" screamed the negress, waving her hands to and fro before the table with the view of protecting as much of it as she could. "You keep off! Go 'long 'bout yo' own business, you got no business yer. You seed 'em a starvin', did you fetch 'em a bite? Nary time. Keep yo'se'f off; dem as you ain't fitten ter tie der shoe string done been an' fotch dis feed, an' you po' white trash comes a nosin' roun' for ter gobble it up eh? Nary crum' does you git, so git yo'se'f off—git! git'

Carson, the locksmith, was from a New England village and totally unacquainted with negro nature. Dolly's talk, though perfectly intelligible to the man from the South, appeared almost like giberish to Carson. The expression of her little viperish eyes, the motions of her ears, her whole appearance struck the locksmith as wierd and uncanny. The other man's first feeling at sight of the negress' opposition was amusement that so puny a creature, so inferior a creature should set herself against him; the next moment he resented the idea that one of a class so infinitely below him should have the insolence to oppose.

"She's a mad witch," said Carson. "Come or she'll scratch

you."

The big man was angry, he swore he was hungry and meant to eat and no impudent nigger could scare him.

"Nary crum' does you git!" screeched Dolly, every nerve in her black body alert and alive with rage. "Nary crum'!—not ter save yo' low down life!—nary crum'! (waving her arms with wild fury) You spec gran white folks like Miss Roma Charmon an' Miss Conny Ashfud gwine fetch dese goodies what come all de way from de Islan' for low down po' white trash ter gobble up?—Clar out! clar out!"

"What do you want to stir up that witch's temper for? She'll scratch and bite worse than any black cat!" said Carson.

The big man stood as if spell bound and stared at the negress--a change had come over him, he thought no more of the food.

"Stop your confounded foolery!" he yelled at last. "I'll not trouble your d——d grub! Tell me where it came from! How did it come here in this hole?"

"Grander white folks en eber you seed fotch it yer-dat's

how it comed," said Dolly, still maintaining her high belligerent aspect.

"'Do you mean to say that Miss Roma Charlmonte brought

that stuff here?"

"What's dat ter you ef she did or ef she didn't? Miss Roma's a born lady, de fus' quality in de State o' Souf Callina, dey's got hundeds an' hundeds o' niggahs, a islan full o' cotton bale, an' barls an' barls o' gole—dey dont want nuffin ter say to sech as you—nary wud! so clar out!—clar out!—clar out!

Hillyard, which was the big man's name, pulled at his beard

in angry perplexity.

"Here's a rum go, Carson," he said, "to stumble on my own victuals—sent from my own home—here in this infernal house."

"What'll you get by standing there, making that wild cat spit and snarl?" returned Carson. "I thought you wanted to talk business to-night?"

"So I do! and by thunder! this thing pricks me on to the

work like a dozen pitchforks!"

The two men went out. Dolly's wrath subsiding she returned to her corner, wrapped herself in her blanket and resolved to keep on the watch lest they should came again. Mrs. Gaff had waked up and watched from her bed the negress' valorous defense of the table, such was her exhaustion and the soothing influence of warmth and a satisfied stomach, she immediately went to sleep again. Squatting behind the stove in the hottest place, Dolly leaned her head against the wall which separated her from the men and listened to the sounds going on within. There was only a board partition, every word could be distinctly heard, Carson built a fire, his companion walked about the floor impatiently.

"It's enough to make a fellow howl," said the latter, "to see

one's own food and not be able to lay hands on it."

"What do you mean Hillyard?" asked the locksmith, poking

the fire to make it burn.
"I mean by thunder!" roared the angry Hillyard kicking a chair out of his path. "I mean it's a d-d shame for a gentleman to be in my fix! All that stuff in there came from my place, cooked by my niggers! I tell you its rasping. I ought to be the master of fifteen thousand a year, I ought to have slaves to come at my beck and call, carriages to ride in, my pockets full of gold—credit at the bank;—all this would be mine if I had my rights and by --! all this will be mine if you'll help me get my rights and a cool \$5000 it'll be in your pocket for your help."

"There's no fellow I know of wants \$5000 any worse than I do," said Carson, "show me how and I'll go for it fast enough

you may bet on that."

"I've stood this thing," continued Hillyard walking about restlessly, "for fourteen years, I knew it was a d-d shame, but they had the edge on me; I could do nothing, now I see a chance and by —! I mean to sail in and win! and if you do your part Carson it'll be a young bonanza for you too."

"Explain yourself-I'm all in the dark," said Carson. "You heard that d-d black witch didn't you?"

Up to this moment the individual referred to had paid no particular attention to what they were saying; the word black witch startled her, she pricked up her ears and muttered under her breath:

"You's dar? eh? I's yer! eh? Blab on-blab on."

"Yes I heerd, what of it? I didn't see much sense in what she said."

"You didn't understand-I did and thats where the devil comes in; she said that fine food came from the island, brought here by Miss Roma Charlmonte."

"Well?" said Carson.

"Wot dat?" muttered the negress under her breath, her ears

pricked forward listening and trying to understand.

"Well! - You exasperating old bundle of hard knots!" cried Hillyard, "did I not tell you I was married to a rich widow with more than a hundred negroes and a cotton plantation?"

"Yes; you also told me you had parted from the widow, and that the widow's father owned the negroes and the land and you

could not touch them."

"So far correct. Now we come to business. That old curmudgeon can't last long, he's had one stroke of paralysis, the next will carry him off certain, when he is gone I mean to step in Master of the place."
"How's that?" asked Carson. "Won't you have a pipe Hill-

yard, smoke'll soothe your feeling?"

Pretty soon Dolly knew that both men were solacing themselves by smoke, it penetrated and filled the air of the Gaff

"You see my wife," said Hillyard, in a quieter tone, feeling the influence of the noxious weed, "My wife's an only childthe whole estate, every acre of ground and every d—d nigger will fall to her when the old man dies. Now, what's her's is her husband's—I'm her husband, and by——, I mean to stay her husband! There's no divorce law in my State, thank Heaven! She can't get free of me; a man's the master of his wife's property, unless—now mark that unless—unless the old fellow leaves a will tying it up so that he can't touch it."

"Which he'll be sure to do, if he doesn't want you to come in

as the master," said Carson, puffing out volumes of smoke.

"There's where I want you to come in, Carson, there's where you can earn your \$5,000, if you'll execute a neat little plan I've laid out," said Hillyard eagerly.

"Go on," said Carson.

"Of course I know the old fellow has a will, and I know where he keeps it, and I want you to get hold of it. You see I've got a friend down there—a relative, who keeps me posted; the existence of the will is well known on the island—he has left every red cent to his granddaughter, which of course, cuts me out in toto. It's a d—d shame! I feel that I am perfectly justified in getting ahead of the old rascal, and I will get ahead of him! There they are, rolling in wealth, feasting and flourishing like princes, and here I am living from hand to mouth, one day a pocket full of money, the next, not a d-d cent."

"The way with all gamblers," philosophically remarked Cas-

"Hasn't a husband the natural and legal right to his wife's

property? Answer me that, Carson, yes or no?"
Carson gave a grunt which his companion accepted as assent. "Every fool knows that the moment the ceremony is over what's her's is his. Well, here, I've been cheated out of my lawful rights by that ill-tempered old rascal, her father, for fourteen years. Can anybody blame me if I get my rights by any means that come convenient? The law would give it to me, if that old curmudgeon would let the law have its way and die without a will. I consider it my right and my duty to act with the intent of the law, and see that my wife inherits the property she ought to inherit as her father's only child. The old man has no right to cut my wife off without a cent just to spite me. He ought to die without a will, and by —— he shall die without a will—at least, no will shall be found."

"Go on," cried Carson, in the same quiet way.

"You see, if he dies without a will, I am, to all intents and purposes, his heir-everything comes straight to me through my wife. If he leaves a will--'

"Your fat's in the fire," said the slow Carson.

"Exactly! Now you see how it is-I don't intend a will shall be found."

"How'll you help it?"

"Easy enough. Suppose I have a wide-awake friend on the place, suppose that friend knows exactly where that document is kept? Suppose in the hurry and flurry of sickness and death, that document falls into his hands? I tell you, Carson, it will be the easiest earned \$5,000 you ever heard of. Your trade'll help you on, in fact it was your trade that made me fix on you for the job. You can get up a tale of misfortune, shipwreck, anything; on a large place like that there are always a hundred jobs in your line, gates to be fixed, hinges to put on, machinery put in order. Wages needn't be an object, and those rich fellows never mind a fellow's feed, they'll keep you a year if you make yourself the least bit useful. You see they don't live as we do here, they're not afraid of robbers, they don't lock their doors at night, and seldom lock drawers or desks, niggers never bother such things, and there's nobody on the island to steal; niggers never steal anything but pigs and chickens and melons. O, I know the customs down there."

"They've got penitentiaries down there, I guess." said Carson

dryly.

"Yes, but where's the danger? Keep your eyes open and have the keys ready, and when the next stroke of paralysis comes, as come it must very soon, in the midst of the row and rumpus, you'll unlock the desk, get the document, hide it in some safe place, until it's safe for you to come up and give it to me; why should they suspect you? If it were me, now, the thing would be different, they don't know but I'm dead and buried, but I've been kept posted all the time. If they suffer by it, it's their own fault, I've not been treated right. I made a fair offer, as fair as a gentleman could make. I wrote to the old man after my wife left me, that if he'd allow me half the proceeds of the plantation, I'd go away and give them no further trouble."

"He didn't accept that liberal offer?"

"Accept h-l! He scorned it, sent my letter back with only one line written upon it: 'You are a fool as well as a knave!' Do you wonder that I swore to get even with him?"

"Rather hard on you, I confess," said Carson.

"A pretty way for a man to treat his daughter's husband! If you get that document and I come into my rights, I reckon it'll make the old coon turn over in his grave and gnash his old teeth and pull his white hair, and serve him right, too," said Hillyard, gloating over the idea.

"I guess it'll be a little harder to get that document than you think for, Jack," said Carson, knocking ashes out of his pipe, feeling in a little better spirits under the influence of the tobacco

poison to which he had accustomed his system.

"Dockymen," muttered the negro listener on the other side the wall. "What is dem dockymens?" but shake her head of the wall. as she might, she could get no glimpse of their meaning.

"It's a pity," said Carson, that you didn't pull friendly with your wife until the old man pegged out."

"I'm not the sort of a man, Carson, to truckle to a woman," replied the gallant husband. "Do I look like a man to be tied to a woman's apron strings? Do I look like a man to go whining around a woman to get permission to do this or that? Sir-ee! I'm one of the men that knows his rights, and knows a man's the head of the family. Why, by ! I hadn't been married two months before my wife began to make trouble. I needed a little cash, I was going to the races, and needed it badly, and hit on the easiest plan to raise the wind. I just caught up a likely young nigger, took him to the city, put him in a trader's mart, told the trader to sell him for what he'd fetch; such a hulla-ba-loo as my wife set up you never heard, and for a trifle like that! She plainly said that no gentleman in her family had ever sold a nigger, they would as soon think of selling one of their own children. I told her her family might go to thunder, that I meant to do as I pleased, and the sooner she recognized the fact that I was the head of the family, the better it

would be for her. Would you believe it, Carson, by the time I got back home from the trader's yard, the d——d nigger was there, back on the place?"

"How did that happen? Run away from the trader?"

"Run away h-l! No! he was brought away by that rascally curmudgeon, my wife's father. You see, just as soon as the old fellow got wind of what I had done, he put off hot and fast for that trader's mart, ordered the black rascal to follow him, which he did grinning, and came back grinning, sitting side by side with the old fool in the family carriage, and sent for me to come out and speak to him, which I did, though mad enough at his high-handed impudence, undertaking to meddle with my affairs because I had married his daughter. Well, I went out to see him, and he coolly informed me, right in the face of that grinning nigger, that it was a penitentiary offense to steal nigger in his State, and if I ever stole another one of his he'd prosecute me, and put me where I'd be taught some useful trade. Then it was that for the first time I found out that he had never given his daughter any legal right to the land and niggers he claimed—the title still vested in him. Consequently my hands were tied. However, I resolved to make the best I could of a bad bargain, we had a splendid cotton crop that year, I never saw finer; 600 bales of the best sea-island I ever saw. I took great interest in the picking, ginning, and baling of that cotton, expecting to put ten thousand dollars in my pocket. check-mated there, too; that confounded old wretch, my fatherin-law, sent me a written notice not to meddle with the cotton on his place—his! when he had given it to his daughter years before; her first husband considered it as his property, but he was a spoony fellow, content to stay at home tied to his wife's apron strings, so they never told him it wasn't his cotton and his niggers and land, and he died in the belief that he was a wealthy man. I'm not that sort of a tooth pick, they couldn't keep me tied down there looking after the sick niggers. I like manly sports, the turi, the excitement of billiards, cards, dice—they couldn't understand me, they're a hum-drum set down there on that island anyway, and think to live on one of their big plantations with half a thousand niggers to look after, is the way they live in Heaven."

"You couldn't get your wife to see things in the way you

did?"

"Get her? why no! she was horrified at a fellow's going to the races, she thought cards wicked. But I could have managed my wife very well if she hadn't had that infernal father of hers to back her up in her capers and I could have managed him if he hadn't had the law on his side and flung the penitentiary in my face to checkmate my moves. There's where he had me. You see Carson, a man may do what he d—d please with his wife's property, but they call it stealing if you touch your wife's father's property. I tell you it was like an infernal rope around

a fellow's neck, it jerked me back whenever I started to go on. It's enough to drive a man mad! and the meanness of the thing! They're like the dog in the manger, not willing to see a fellow enjoy money, because they didn't know how to enjoy it themselves. I don't see what good their money does 'em, they don't know how to spend it. They don't know anything of life, not a d—d thing; they vegetate—that's all! and here's the rightful owner, who could get something out of the money, who knows what life is, cheated out of every dime the plantation brings in.

Hillyard restlessly walked the floor as he talked.

"It is rather hard on you Jack," said his companion sympathizingly, "I don't wonder you want to get hold of that important document."

"Dockymen?" muttered the perplexed Dolly slowly shaking her turbaned head in a vain effort to understand the word so new to her ears. "Hit beats my time, hit do—dockymen—dockymen!"

After which reflection she again applied herself to listening. Carson asked if there had been a child by the marriage?

"No! by ——!" replied the other angrily. "There's where my bad luck came in; if there'd been a child I'd have made that child a lever to move them. The law gives a man control of his child—all the grandfathers and wives in the world cant wrest that power from him. A child was my great hope after I left the place; I waited in the neighborhood to see if fortune would favor me that much, but she didn't."

"Why did you leave the place? you at least got a living out

of it?" asked Carson.

"Well you see after I was ordered not to sell the cotton and the niggers, of course the niggers began to think themselves as much masters as I, and I just determined to take down their impudence a little, so I went for some of the most audacious one day an' thrashed 'em like fury; they were house servants, and you know, or rather you don't know—you being a Yankee—how house servants are petted and pampered in that part of the country,—you never heard of such a row as it kicked up; if I had tied up my wife and flogged her to an inch of her life there'd have been no more fuss. My wife went into hysterics, the doctor was sent for, the rest of the negroes set up a howl like so many wild wolves, in fact the whole plantation was in a turmoil. I took my hat and went off a fishing and by thunder! when I came back the house was quiet enough—not a soul stirring about it. I went to my wife's rooms, and by the hoky-poky! she'd packed up her duds and gone; I called the servants who lived about the house—the last one was gone too! The housemaids, the cook, the coachman, the carriage driver and the carriage too. The overseer lived about a quarter of a mile off, I went to him for information—he didn't have any to give, except that he had seen the carriage drive off in the direction of the old man's. I

mounted a horse, rode over to the old man's and asked for my wife. My father-in-law came on the porch to receive me, looking as grim as a gridiron and told me I couldn't see my wife that she had made up her mind to live with her father and that I certainly should never step foot in his house. The house servants were all with him. He condescended to say that if I chose to live on the plantation and board at the overseer's I could do so as long as I behaved myself and took care not to meddle with the negroes or the cotton. I asked him if he expected a gentleman could accept such terms as those? He grinned and said he wouldn't offer them to a gentleman, and that's the last I ever saw of the old rascal. Oh! if there had come a child, I'd have wrung and twisted them finely! I'd have made them loosen their purse strings and get down on their marrow bones.'

"Still," said Carson, "it's a pity you hadn't gone slow and kept your wife in a good humor until her father got out of the way."

"What was I to do?" argued the injured husband. "How should I know that the old fellow had the ropes on me in that way? I knew whatever was my wife's was mine. I never went beyond the letter of the law; they got me by a trick—it was a scoundrelly trick to go back on a gift in that way—he had given the property to his daughter, if I had been contented to stay on the place and vegetate as they did, I dare say I might have staid there to this day and lived a prince of the plantation, but that didn't suit me; I wasn't made to dangle on to a woman's skirts, or bob about among nigger cabins, listening to the groans and grunts of superannuated apes and by the Lord! Carson, the day you meet me here in this room with that document in your hand your fortune as well as mine is made!"

"Dockymens?' repeated the listening negress, "dat ar dockymens is de devil to fine out. Lor! lor! how I guine get dat dockymen? how I guine get dat fetched dockymen critter?"

Then after wagging her head several times in deep and dense perplexity, a sudden resolve moved her. Slipping off her shoes which were heavy and thick and which screeched loudly Dolly stole as softly as a cat whose paws are shod with fur. to the door, openedit, silently went down the stairway carrying her shoes with her.

"I guine git a good look at dat ar dockymen man," was her

thought, "I wants to know him when I sees him agin."

When at the bottom of the steps she put on the shoes which made a hideous creaking, boldly marched up the steps and on by the Gaff door and tapped at Carson's.

"Who the mischief is it this time of night?" she heard Hill-

yard ask.

"We'll open and see," said the locksmith going to the door. They did open and there stood Dolly smiling and curtseying with her very best plantation politeness and a face as innocent, to use her own description, "as ary suckin dove" and "as smilin" as a basket of chips."

The two men stared.

"Servant mars," she said dropping another curtesy and look-

ing the very perfection of negro amiability.

The two white men could hardly believe their own eyes, could hardly believe that this innocent, unsuspicious, amiable looking creature was the black fury they had left brandishing her clawlike hands before the table so menacingly.

Dropping another curtesy of humble conciliation Dolly

stretched out one black hand with a cob pipe in it.

"Please massa a fillin' o' 'bacca," she begged, "I's plum out'en 'bacca, an sech a tone down toofache I feels a comein on! de se'f-same ole toof whar gin me sech a sight o' trouble las' Chrismas jes bout dis same time o' night-nuffin does no good to dat toof 'cepin a good smoke, an I's plum outen 'bacca—a fillin please massa," grinning and dropping another courtesy.

Carson gave the tobacco and she dropped another curtesy, and another, and then another by way of thanks and then she turned

to go, "Stop," cried Hillyard, the suspicion darting into his mind, that she might have been listening, that he had talked too

Dolly turned back her black face beaming with innocent good

"What're you doing up so late? Why aren't you in bed

asleep?"

With the most innocent expression Dolly replied that she had been in bed and fast asleep when her tooth began to jump "jes like it wanted to jump clean outen her mouf, den she jes got up an sarch and sarch for de bacca an could'n fine none, an den comes up to get a fillin from de gentmen."

Hillyard asked where she had slept?

With an open honest air Dolly said "arter she mended up de fiah for Miss Gaff she jes went long down stars to her bed-dem po Gaffs—dey had no bed."

"Oh its all right" said Carson understanding his companions suspicion, and looking upon it as quite absurd "She's all right."

But Hillyard was not so easily satisfied. He eyed the negress

with an uncomfortable feeling.
"Were you ever a slave?" he asked abruptly.

"No sah!" replied Dolly with indignant emphasis "I never was no slave to nobody. I b'longs to de Charman' folks—de grandes' folks in de state o' Souf Callina—dey is my people and I is dey people, but I never was no slave to nobody in all my born days—no sah!"

"So you belonged to the Charlmonte people-what was-or is

your masters name?"

"Mas Ed Charmon, dats ole master, den dar is Mas Charles Ed'rd, dats young master, ole masters son, dey's bofe on 'em my people, I b longs to em, an dey blongs to me."

"Then what're you doing up here among these Yankees?

did you run away from the Charlmonte plantation?"

This was just about the most insulting question that could have been put to Dolly, proud as she was of her owners, and proud of her connection with them. Her eyes darted fire, in a flash the amiability fled, and fury filled her. To use her own description when picturing the scene to her young master, as she did afterward—her "dander riz right up." Tossing back her turbaned head in high disdain, a derisive sneer on her black lips, "Run away eh!" she cried "run away? Fust class darkey's dont neber run from der own people; ef you was well 'quainted, which you aint is plain to be saw, wid fust quality white foks, or fust quality suvans you'd a knowed dat! I's none o' yo common niggers, I lets you know, I's a fust quality white lady widout de white skin, dat's what I is!"

lady widout de white skin, dat's what I is!"

"And I suppose" said Hillyard on purpose to irritate, "I suppose you were too lazy to work and the overseer flogged you

and you ran away; was that it?"

Dolly's eyes darted vicious glances at the speaker-then she

replied with lofty dignity:

"Ders no use," holding her head high "no sort o' use o' splainin to de po' white trash in dis town how I comed up yer—

po white trash haint de sense to unstan' hit."

With that she walked off her head so high and cast back so disdainfully, there seemed some danger of her falling backwards. The two men watched her go down the steps and heard the loud creaking of her shoes with some satisfaction, it dissipated Hillyard's suspicion that he might have been overheard.

"She would not have understood if she had" said Carson.

"She seems to be flighty and foolish any way" remarked Hillyard "She must have been drunk when we saw her tonight."

"Very likely" returned Carson "she's always getting into

quarrels with her neighbors."

The two men heard the heavy creaking shoes go all the way to the bottom of the stairway, then they shut the door and did not see Dolly's masterly maneuver carried out. Sitting down on the bottom step she again pulled off her shoes and again went up stairs, but this time she stole up as softly as a cat, re-entered the Gaff room and resumed her old place by the stove near the wall, where she could hear what was said by the "po" white trash" in the next room.

"She must be a runaway" were the words that made her ears

prick forward and her eyes dance.

"There's a chance for you, Carson, to earn a hundred or so-write to her master and find out what reward he'll pay for her

arrest and return to the plantation."

This suggestion instead of angering the negress seemed to overcome her with hilarity; not daring to laugh out loud she shook in noiseless chuckles and when Carson replied that he would like to "make a hundred by catching the good-for-nothing runaway black, Dolly's lean body bent almost double as she writhed in the very ecstacy of mirth. After somewhat relieving her feelings in this noiseless way she straightened herself up, smoothed her features, pricked her ears forward and listened intently, hearnothing more of interest to herself and judging from certain sounds proceeding from the next room that the two men were undressing for bed, Dolly's mind returned to the enjoyment of what she had already heard.

"Lor! Lor!" she panted, almost breathless with the exercise of her soundless mirth. Lor! Lor! Wot a worl! wot a worl!"

"Dolly's reflections of a serious nature always seemed to be aided by gentle waggings from side to side of her turbaned head. Her conscience, often subject to tender spells, now began to prick her for too much indulgence in the sin of levity, for which, so to speak, she called herself to order, pulled herself together, drew over her face its most penitential expression, the ghost of a sigh escaped her heart, followed by the ghost of a groan. Her pants, sighs, and groans were all soundless, as were the words her lips framed.

"Bress de Lawd!" she said, in that soundless way. "Bress de good Lawd for his many mussies! He am my trus an' my 'spote! He am de way an' de life o' dis po' sinnah in de day o' tribelation, an' de day o' trial! Wen de wicked cease from

troublin' an' de wary am at res'!"

CHAPTER X.

CHRISTMAS DAY DAWNED

Bright, beautiful and cold. The white, unspotted snow lay thick over streets and house tops. The storm had spent itself. The clouds were gone, the sunlight glistened and dazzled the eye.

About twelve o'clock Charlmonte and Wilmer were briskly making their way in the direction of Dolly's lodgings. The former carried in his hand a large brown-paper parcel. They were overtaken by their friend Calyx.

"How did you get along with the woman last night?" asked

"Very well. I left her in good hands. I think she'll get over her suicidal mania. What are you doing in this out-of-the way ally?"

"O, we're going to pay a Christmas call on a lady," said Wilmer, laughing, "one of Charlmonte's friends. Come with us, she's a character. What are you doing here?"

"I also, am going to see a woman. On business, however,

not pleasure."
"You're such a confounded secretive fellow, Calyx," said Wil-

mer. "We spread our plans to the wind and talk 'em over by

the hour. You are as mum as an oyster,"

"When I have plans worth telling you shall know them," replied the young fellow gravely. "At present they are little more than dreams, vague dreams, when they assume substantial shape

I'll lay them before you."

They reached Dolly's door. When Mrs. Flood from over the street, saw the three well-dressed young men stop, she jumped to the conclusion that something very serious was up-probably the negress had been murdering some innocent person, or stealing watches—nothing was too bad for Dolly to do.

"She's been a doin' some devilment, shure and shure," remarked the lugubrious grocery woman to her young son and heir, the freckle-faced, red-haired Mike, aged twelve years and

some months.

Calyx also stopped before Dolly's door. Charlmonte knocked. A lean, black face, above which towered a tall turban, flattened itself against the glass of the front window. The next instant the face and turban disappeared, the front door opened, the negress stood in it, her face irradiated with joy, as she opened wide her arms and flung them around the Southern student.

"Lor!" she cried, after squeezing his stalwart form to her maternal breast, releasing him, and standing back a step to get a good view of the great six-foot fellow. "Lor! Lor! how de boy do grow !- To be sho! To be sho! An' ony day fo' yistiddy, as you mout say, he want mo'n so high." She held one

of her claw-like hands about two feet from the floor.

"Do you not intend to invite us in, Aunt Dolly?" inquired the

object of her affections.

The negress still stood in the door and the three young men on the steps, which little piece of ill-manners Dolly had not performed without a motive. On opening the door to let in the young men, she had caught sight of the two "po" white Arish" faces watching from over the way. She prolonged and exagerated he affectionate greeting in full sight of those "Arish" eyes, on purpose to let them know how she stood with "gran" fus' quality folks." This accomplished, Dolly politely courtesied and invited her visitors to come in to the fire.

Her room was neat and comfortable.

"So you think I have grown since you last saw me, Aunt Dolly?" said the young Southerner, who had stood six feet in his stockings for the last two years and had seen Dolly about two months ago. Charlmonte never had made any effort to cure her of the delusion that he was continuing to grow. Although she seemed, at each interview to realize the fact that he was grown, the moment he was out of her sight, her mind seemed to revert to the time of his boyhood when, he "growed his arms out'en his jackets, and his legs out'en his breeches' every month or

"Growed!" she repeated glowing upon him, "Lor Mas Ed'rd

you's got way up 'bove yo' ole nuss, you is dat, sho! You's

growd to be a big, fine man, you is dat, sho."

"Above you!" cried the young stalwart, laughing in all the pride of his six feet and broad shoulders, "I should say so, Dolly. And you, such a little mite of a body."

"I's little, but I's some, Mas Ed'rd, I's ekel to a dozen o' dese big, lubberly po' white folks clodhoppers. I ken tun out mo' wuk any day I sets my head to it, sho!"

"But you never set your head to it, eh, Dolly?" returned the

young man laughingly.

"Dey aint no use o' me wukin," she returned, "no mannah o' use. Dont I git my quat'ly 'lowance reglar? Whar's de use o' wukin?"

"Not a bit in the world," said her young master.

Dolly then inquired after the folks at home, and said she was most dead to visit the island and spend Christmas there, but she could not exactly make it. He asked what was the difficulty,

money run out as usual?

"Lors! Mas Ed'rd," she replied, a joyous grin lighting up her face. "You's hit de nail on de head dis time, sho! I's sech a fool wid my money, Mas Ed'rd, hit jes runs fru my fingers soon's. I lays hands on my quatly 'lowance—hit do.'

"Confess, now Dolly," said the young man in a bantering way; "Confess now, that you stay here because you like this great city better than your old Island home. You can't keep away from

its theatres, its concerts, its circuses."

An expression of injured indignation came into the black's face and eyes.

"Lor! Mas Ed'rd, to go for to 'cuse me o' goin' to theters an!"

suckerces !-And me a 'fessor o' 'ligion!''

Hastening to apologize and make his peace for the insulting; intimation, the young man tossed into her lap the big bundle he had brought. It was his Christmas present for his old nurse.

Dolly cut the cord and opened the bundle. Her face grew luminous with delight at sight of its contents—a new dress, a scarlet shawl, shoes, stockings, head-handkerchiefs of the gayest colors.

"Lors! Mas Ed'rd!" she cried. "You is de sef same gener-somest boy you allus used to be! For all de worl jes like yo" pa!" She spread the things in her lap and admired them. "To be sho! to be sho!" she softly murmured, passing her hand gently over each article, and feasting her eyes on the brilliant col-The shawl especially fascinated her gaze; spreading it across her lap she contemplated it with delighted admiration.

"Mas Ed'rd," she said, looking at him with sudden seriousness, "hits oncommon strornary how you hits de nail on de head e bery time, hit rayly is-rayly is. Dis is de bery sef-same shawl I's been hankerin arter all dis winter. I seed it hangin' in de sto' winder-hits rale strornary how you knowed dat was de shawl I done picked out to get soon as I save up money 'nuff

—hit is dat, sho!"

BLACK AND WHITE.

Then she spread on her lap the dress pattern and contempla-

ted it with tender affection.

"Lor bless dese chilluns!" she said feelingly, "Dey's de givenest chilluns in de worl—dem Islan chilluns is. Der's Miss Roma an' Miss Conny done been yer an' gin me de prettiest sort o' presents—Dar dem on de bed, Mas Ed'rd, you ken see for yo'sef."

"They have been here already?" cried the young Southerner, his heart giving a bound at the sound of a name that was music

in his ears.

"Dey's yer now," said Dolly, "dey's upstars wid dem po' Gaff chilluns, dey brung dem chilluns lots o' things, too."

"Upstairs—now—without you!—why, Dolly, is it a fit place

for young ladies?" said the young man, in vague alarm.

Dolly related the story of the Gaff family, how "dat ar oudacious Gaff man got drunk an' beat his wife, an' broke her bones, an' how de little Gaff chilluns went out to beg, der mammy bein laid up in bed, an' de daddy bein' took to jail, an' how she foun' dem Gaff chilluns schrooched up in de do'way, as she was comin' home from pra'r meetin', an' how she took an' carried them to Miss Roma an' Miss Conny, because she knowed dey'd give 'em somefin to keep 'em from starvin plum to def, an' how dey was jes about to set down to de grandes' supper, all dem school gals standin' roun' de big tukey an' cakes, an' all sorts o' goodies, sent from de Islan', looking jes zackly like angels widout no wings, when dey jes up an' sez dey would ruther gin de supper to de chilluns' po' ma dan to eat it dem sevs, an' so Miss Roma she comed herself, an' dat Arish white man, he fotch de box, an' den Miss Roma an' Miss Conny dey comed agin dis blessed mornin', an' dar dey now was up stars wid dem Gaff chilluns a seen' of 'em put on der new shoes an' stockins.''

The young Southerner listened with breathless interest to this story, which was but little better than jargon to the ear of Calyx, totally unaccustomed to negro dialect. Charlmonte asked when the young ladies would be down. Dolly volunteering to go and see, ran up stairs and pretty soon returned with the three little Gaff children, proud of the loud creaking of their new shoes.

"'Dese is dey,'' said Dolly, shoving the children to the front, 'dese is dem chilluns what would a freeze to def 'ceptin' I foun' em scrooched up in de do'way as I come home from pra'r meet-

in'—dese is dem sef-same chilluns."

"But where are the young ladies?" asked the Southerner, after duly admiring the children and their shoes, and putting a piece of silver in each little hand.

"Dey's comin'," said Dolly, and at the same moment the two girls came down the narrow stairway and entered Dolly's room;

the three young men arose to receive them.

Miss Ashford blushed beautifully as she felt the eyes of the young Southerner upon her.

"Why, Dolly," said Miss Roma gaily, "if you had told us you had so much grand company we might have put on our best dress."

"Lors, honey!" replied the negress, clearing the things from a cedar chest, which she invited the girls to sit upon, her supply of chairs being limited to three, "dese boys 'sprise me more'n dey do you a comin' yer wid so many presens for po' ole Dolly—Set down, honey, set down on de ches'—Christmas dont come but onst a year."

but onst a year."

"Dolly," said the young Southerner, after much more idle chat of the sort youth indulges in, "these gentlemen are friends of mine and would like to hear you tell how it happened that your master gave you your freedom to come and go like the

wind, whithersoever it suits your fancy.

Dolly modestly pretended that the the story was "scacely wuf

tellin'," but after some little persuasion she complied.

The young man well knew that to tell the story was the supreme delight of her life.

Dolly begun,

"You see young Massers" addressing herself directly to Wilmer and Calyx, as being the Northern gentlemen for whose benefit the story was told. "Mas Ed'rd dar whar you sees growed up so tall was den nuffin but a little shaver not mo'n so high " holding her claw like hand a foot or so above the floor "an I was a young slip uv a gal den, an dat mornin'I was in de flower garden a pullin' de weeds outen de tube roses, rechin down dis way (illustrating the action of pulling up weeds) when I hears de chilluns, whar was in de back yard playin long dar 'bout de well, I heers 'em gin sech awful screeches dat I riz right up an' says to myse'f says I "What dat fur?" Den I hern Aunt Sally's Sam, which was a right smart sized boy Sam was, I hern Sam holler out jes as loud as he could as "Mas Ed'rd's done fall in de well! Mas Ed'rd's done fall in de well!" which was monsus deep and monsus dangus, so I jes drap dem weeds outen my hand an farly flied for dat well; and dar all around de well was dem black chilluns screechin'an' screamin' der seves into fits, an nary white nor black man nigh nuff fer to go down dat well an fetch out little Mas Ed'rd. So I jes kotch hole o' de rope an slid down like a house a fire, den when I got mose to de bottom I hilt on wid one hand and rech down wid de oder a feelin' for little Mas Ed'rd (graphically illustrating as she talked) an' praise de Lord! I kotch de chile by de har o' his head, which was long wid de prettiest curls you eber see in all 'yo born days! den I screech for 'em to pull me up, an I jes hilt dat chile tight wid one arm an hilt de rope wid de oder hand, and by dat time Big Bill, de carriage driver, he was dar, ready for ter draw us up, and presenly up we comed bofe on us an' when we got to de top dar was ole Mas Ed'rd an free or four black men ready to kotch hole o' me, an kotch hole o' little Mas Ed'rd and haul us bofe safe outen dat danjus well on to dry lan', same as Jonah wat de bible tell about,

an dar was little Mas Ed'rd widout no bone broke, but a right smart cut in de head whar he hit hisse'f gin de stone cubbin o' de well, an dar was Miss Clare, his ma, jes as white as ary ghose, and dar was Mas Ed'rd, his pa, skeered mose to deaf, an' dar was dem black chilluns a settin' on de grass under de plum tree jes a howlin an' a howlin becaze dey say little Mas Ed'rd's done drownded in de well, an' when Mas Ed'rd and Miss Clare see de boy a comin to his senses openin his eyes and talkin' same as ever, Miss Clare, she kotch me in her arms an' gin me sech a hug, an' Mas Ed'rd he say "Dolly you's a black dimon' you is, an' from dis day, bofe so long as ever so be de good Lord he lets you live, you's a free 'ooman, to do jes what you please to do, an' you's to have all de money you wants long as you lives from dis day forf" an dat's jes hit young massers, Ole Mas Ed'rd he keeps his word 'bout de money and I jes goes 'bout whar I

pleases to, an draws my quatly 'lowance—dat's hit.''
The two young men praised her courage and Wilmer asked how it happened that she had strayed so far from her island

home?

Dolly replied that it "war a accident ontily" one summer she had "heerd that chambermaids were wanted at de ole Virginny Suffer" Springs, so she went to that place, and among the visitors was Mrs. Blaine and her children who took a fancy to their nimble black chambermaid and persuaded her to accompany them to their home in the city of New York. She remained with them a year—that got her in the way of traveling, she had been home several times since then, but had acquired the taste for travel and excitement.

The Blaine family! this possessed interest for at least one of her auditors-Calyx had come for the very purpose of finding a descendent of that family-could it be that this negress knew the parentage of the child he was in search of? the little blond, bold faced child who watched with curious eyes all that was going

on?

Soon after this Dolly's visitors rose to leave; she followed them to the door and detained them there-all five, partly to gain a little desired information but mostly that her natural enemy the "Arish 'ooman," should have another full view of her grand visitors.

"Mas Ed'rd" she called out as they were starting off "stop

jes one minute ef you please, I wants to ax a question. "Out with it!" said the young man stopping to hear.

"Mas Ed'rd" a look of profound perplexity came over her black face "what kinder varmints is dockymens?"

"What!" cried the Southerner.

"Dockymens?" repeated Dolly the perplexity deepening in her face "I wants ter know what is dem varmints dockymens, de wust sort."

"Dockymens! you've stumped me Dolly-I give it up-I cannot enlighten you."

"Lors! Mas Ed'rd an you sech a scollard!" cried Dolly sceptical as to his ignorance "I says to myself says I, ef dars anybody as knows dem dockymens its Mas Ed'rd."

The young man said he was sorry he could not come up to her

expectations, but had never heard of "dockymens" before.

"Lors! Mas Ed'rd" returned the negress, chagrin and disappointment in her face "ef anybody had a tole me as you did'n know dem dockymens I'd a tole 'em dey was plum fools, I would dat sho!"

Dolly was evidently so earnest the young man began to think-

so did the others.

"Perhaps she does not pronounce the word rightly" said

Miss Roma, "dockymens! where did you hear of it, Dolly?"

Dolly explained that she had heard two men say "ef dey could get hold of a sutten dockymen it'd be wuf a pile o' money to 'em an she was jes dat curus to know what a dockymen was."

"Was it document they said Dolly?" asked the young lady.
"To be sho, honey, aint I been tellin of you all dis time as its

dockymens? to be sho honey, dockymens."

"Document, well now I understand you" said Charlmonte taking from his pocket a folded paper, "this is a document, Dolly, a paper on which something is written—a deeclaration of some one's will or wish."

Dolly took the paper in her hand turned it over and over, a

look of wonder and curiosity in her face.

"To be sho!" she muttered to herself as she unfolded the paper handling it delicately as if it were a live creature and might bite her, "To-be-sho! an dis is a dockymen! well! well! well! I made sho it war some sort o' varmint or oder Mas Ed'rd."

"No! no!" replied the young man "a document is not a varmint, Dolly it is a paper on which something is written. For instance, when a man is going to die and wishes to say what shall be done with his property after his death, he writes his wishes down on a piece of paper like that and then we call it a document, and that document becomes a valuable paper, worth thousands of dollars."

The negress looked at the paper with curious intentness "To be sho! to be sho!" she muttered reflectively. "I unstans now

Mas Ed'rd-I unstans. Thanky sir, Thanky sir!"

She dropped a curtesy, gave the paper back and the young people walked away, four in one direction, one in another.

Dolly stood in the door as long as she could see, then cried out "Christmas gif' to you all! Christmas gif'! Christmas gif'!" which public demonstration was got up to show to the enemy across the street on what good terms she was with her grand visitors.

Calyx bade the others good morning and walked off in another direction, but returned before Dolly had left the door. He said he wanted to see Mrs. Gaff. After a short interview with that lady who was yet confined to her bed, but comfortably supplied with food and fuel, thanks to the young ladies—Calyx left, accompanied by the elder clild, the little blond girl with the bold blue eyes. The child trotted on by the student's side perfectly content to go, after being promised a new dress and a pair of red stockings which was the price she demanded for compliance.

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commission her thee telepholy had a toje me as you did a

YOUTH AND BEAUTY.—LOVE AND LOGIC.

The four young people turned their steps in the direction of the Finisher Institute.

Wilmer and Miss Charlmonte started off at a swift pace, the

others followed more slowly.

oried the negrees, thagrin said dient-

"O, those beautiful people!" said Roma, looking back at the two young lovers. "How they feed each other's craving for compliments, for sweet flattery! If I were beautiful I think I would be satisfied to know the fact myself—why should I wish to be told of it by others?"

"You speak as if you did not think yourself beautiful," said

Wilmer.

"And you speak as though you thought every girl imagined herself a beauty."

"By no means. I imagine, though everyone is pretty well

pleased with the person God has given him or her."

"One may be tolerably well satisfied and yet see how much

more lovely other people are," replied the girl.

"Yes; I suppose so. I do not distress myself over the body I possess, yet I very well know it is nothing to be proud of. Look at Charlmonte, how handsome he is."

"And look at Conny, how beautiful she is."

"Rarely beautiful—yet, there are faces I might like better—not half so handsome"—glancing at the dark, intellectual face of the young girl by his side.

Wilmer was one of the few men who admired intellect in women more than mere beauty. "The one fades so early," he said,

"the other lasts with life, and is never tiresome."

"Beauty," said the girl, "is not so essential to your sex as to

mine—that is one advantage you men have over us."

"But I see no good reason why beauty should be more essential to women than to men," said Wilmer. "I dare say your

sex admire masculine beauty as we do feminine."

"The reason is plain," replied the girl. "For instance, what is given a girl to do after she quits school, except to make herself as pretty as possible? Whereas a boy is not told to set about the study of adorning himself, he is given other work to do, other ambitions to strive for."

"This difference you speak of is wholly artificial—is the result of the artificial rules of society and relations of the two sex-

es. There is no natural reason why women should study the art of personal adornment any more than men."

"Do you really think that?"

"I know it. The male savage adorns his person as much as the female savage. Were women educated with the idea of being self-supporting, as men are, they would cease to give the best years of their existence to the art of self-adornment. Women should have aims and ambitions as men have."

"Truly?" asked the young girl, turning on him a quick glance

of inquiry...

"Yes, truly. Why not? Many women never marry; even if they do choose to marry, aims and ambitions will be no disadvantage on the contrary a great benefit."

vantage, on the contrary, a great benefit."

"I am glad to hear that," said Roma, with a bright, joyous smile, "for I am one of the ones destined never to marry, and I

shall forthwith provide myself with aims and ambitions."

"Why are you destined never to marry, more than other young ladies?"

"There are good reasons. I made up my mind six years

ago.'

"That was rather young to settle so momentous a question."
"Yes; but a powerful reason brought it about—and every

day since the determination has been strengthened."

"You really excite my curiosity. I do not wish to be impudent, but I would be extremely pleased to know the story of that determination, and the nature of that pressure that brought it about."

The amused look in Wilmer's eyes told the girl that he was

making a jest of the matter—she was perfectly serious.

"I see," she said, "that you are laughing at me, but it is no laughing thing with me—it caused me a good cry at the time it happened, but I have got over all that, and rather enjoy the idea of single freedom all my life."

"I am more and more curious," said the young man, still

with that amused look.

"I have never yet told anyone of the cause of my determination, but all my friends know that I have made up my mind.

Of course I'll not tell you who only make fun of it.

"If you are in earnest I will be very serious—I will look at the question like a philosopher. Have you never heard your cousin Charlmonte on my profoundly philosophical bent? No! Well, I can tell you he has immense respect for my wisdom on all subjects, and if you will confide in me and consult me as to your aims and ambitions, the benefit will he incalculable."

"Your modesty is as remarkable as your philosophical wis-

dom," said Roma.

"But first of all," urged the young man, "I entreat of you to let me know what could have caused a girl of eleven or twelve—you said you came to that determinition six years ago, and that would put the occurence in your eleventh year—"

"I was twelve at the time."

"-The determination never to marry, that is a point in hu-

man nature I wish to understand."

"O, that was very simple. It happened thus—but it is a secret I have never told my own people, lest it might make them a little sorry for me, which I do not want-I once heard my grandfather, who loves me more than any person in the world-I am his only grandchild—and Uncle Richard, who is Conny's father, talking about some woman's unhappy marriage; it seems the lady was wealthy, and was married for her money, and the husband turned out to be mean and cruel. Grandfather talked bitterly about it, and said he wished women did not think it necessary to marry, and that he would die content if he knew I would never want to marry—that I was no beauty, and fortune hunters would swarm around me, and ten chances to one I would marry some dog of a man who only wanted my money. Grandfather did not know I overheard this, or he never would have said that I had no beauty, for he loved me too much to say anything to hurt my feelings. That was the first time I had ever thought whether I was pretty or not. I went to the glass and studied my face and compared it with Conny's, Conny always was a perfect beauty. Then I went to Grandpapa and made him happy by telling him I had considered the subject of marriage, and concluded that I was too ugly for any man to seek me for love and I would die before I would marry a man that did not love me, therefore I wanted him to treat me just as if I were a boy, and bring me up to take care of myself and my property, and not look out for a husband to manage it and me. highly applauded this, and ever since has given me the widest freedom. Veils and bonnets and fine dresses he cast aside that is why I am so dark, so sunburnt, like a boy. We live on an island. I had fine horses to gallop over the island, and boats to row on the sea-oh! it pays to be ugly and not care for the complexion. There's cousin Conny, if she stirs out without gloves and veils, she is scolded, lest that lovely skin of hers should be tanned. Now, what I want is a profession—"

"A profession?"

"Yes; so I can do something in the world, just as if I were a man."

"I will think it over," said Wilmer, "and when I am better acquainted with the bent of your mind, we will consult as to the

career you should start on. This is your door."

A carriage stood in front of it, and a great, paunchy, grum coachman, buttoned up to his eyes in a heavy great-coat and fur collar, looked down on the pedestrians, as princes look down on paupers.

The reader will recognize Mr. Puffington, the driver of the Singleton carriage. Roma and Wilmer waited on the steps un-

til Charlmonte and Miss Ashford came up.

"It is Miss Mopson's Aunt's carriage" said the lovely Conny

as soon as she saw the proud Mr. Puffington. "We will now have a chance to see that grand lady—she is in the parlor, come

in gentlemen and warm."

They all four went in, Miss Melissa Mopson, the tearful young lady, whose young mind was filled with sweetly sentimental dreams, was there with her aunt Mrs. Singleton and Mrs. Singleton's two handsome sons, Master Jack, the young philoso-pher, and Master Frederick Singleton. The mother of these two handsome boys was a very handsome woman, dressed with extreme elegance. She strongly resembled her brother Arthur Singleton; marriage had not changed her name, her husband was her cousin as well—in fact all the Singleton family had the same cast of features and form, dark slender faces, blue eyes, narrow foreheads, eyebrows obliquely running to the nose. Miss Mopson, although a niece of the Singletons had no resemblance to them, she was all Mopson as her aunt often remarked. Miss Mopson was not tall and slender, on the contrary she was short and full-formed, with a round face, a pug nose, big, blue, shallow-looking eyes, that filled with tears on the slightest provocation. Miss Mopson's parents were dead, she was taken care of by her aunt and possessed a little money—not much, but enough to support her respectably. Mrs. Singleton had never been fond of this niece—they did not suit—she was "all Mopson" and Miss Mopson always felt as if she were persecuted and not appreciated by her Singleton kin. Miss Mopson thought it necessary to introduce her aunt to her school mates and the two island girls returned the compliment by introducing the two gentlemen to Miss Mopson and her aunt. Then the aunt rose, made a haughty bow and rustled out, Melissa followed with a sadly subdued face, the two boys lingered to gaze at the beautiful Constance Ashford. When that young lady removed her hood, her golden tresses fell in waves down her purple-velvet-clad shoulders, her cheeks were flushed, her violet eyes bright and dewy, never was there a lovelier picture. No wonder the two boys lingered to look.

Miss Mopson followed her aunt into the hall, they stopped a

moment by the stove which gave out a glowing heat.

"I'm glad you did'nt take any notice of 'em aunt" said Miss Mopson with a melancholy pout, "they're stuck up enough now."

"But isn't she a beauty" cried Master Jack with boyish gusto "She's one of the tip-toppest tip-toppers Fred, and looks as if she never could slide down."

"How many times have I requested you Jackson, to cease your

slang?" asked his mother severely.

"They're the most stuck-up girls in school," remarked Miss

Mopson gloomily looking down on the stove.

"The girls are well enough Melissa" said her aunt "I took no notice because the circle of my acquaintance is already sufficiently large—there was no need for an introduction."

"I thought you'd think it impolite if I didn't-Mrs. Finisher is always making us introduce everybody. They're ever so rich and that's what makes 'em so stuck up."

"Who is ever so rich?"

"Those island girls, they dash money about as if it was dirt, waste it on beggars and niggers just to show off, nobody likes 'em. Teresa Wedrington hates 'em.''

"How do you know they are rich?" asked the aunt considera-

bly more interested in the subject.

Miss Mopson with the gloomiest little face related how Rosa Amelia Bickford, who came from Charleston, South Carolina, knew all about the island girls, and Rosa Amelia said they owned the whole island and made hundreds and hundreds of bales of cotton and had hundreds and hundreds of niggers—at least their fathers had, and one of them was an only child.
"Is it the beauty that is the richest?" asked Master Jack.

"No it's the ugly one—though I don't see any great beauty in the other either" replied Miss Mopson still gloomily contemplating the top of the stove.

"Then you dont know what beauty is," said Master Jack." "How could Mopsy know about beauty, she's got none her-

self," said Master Jack pertly.

"Hold your tongue sir, if you can't be more polite" said his his mother sharply "I wish Melissa would box your ears."

But that young lady only let fall a silent tear and gazed on the

stove with a face of darker gloom.

"It isn't wise Melissa" said her aunt "it really is not wise for a girl in your situation to take up dislikes in that way—you should always make friends with rich girls, rich friends may be of use to you."
"Friends?" repeated the melancholy Miss Mopson in a sepul-

chral tone "I have no friends."

"Do pray Melissa" returned her aunt impatiently "don't attempt tragedy, tragedy does not suit your style. A little round face, a pug nose, and a duck of a figure, have no right to run into tragedy, why you will do it is amazing."

"Lively chambermaid parts would suit you Mopsy," said Mas-

ter Jack grinning.

"Stop your impertinence Jackson," said his mother "and remember, Melissa, my advice, make friends with these island girls; it would be a fine thing for you if they invited you home with them some time and you caught a rich planter."

"Do catch him Mopsy, and I'll spend my winters with you and make love to the beauty," said Master Jack not in the least

heeding his mother's reprimand.

Miss Mopson languidly climbed up the stairs after her relations had gone, tears in her eyes, and these gibes in her memory, climbed up to go on with the sentimental story of the "Children of the Abby" which she had hidden under her pillow for safe. keeping.

"Mother," said Master Fred after they were in the carriage driving off "what ails Mopsy? what makes her cry so easy?

wish she was jolly and pretty like that island girl.'

"Melissa's all Mopson," returned his mother "Phil Mopson her father, always went about dismal as an owl, feeling as if everybody was treating him badly. Jackson bid Puffington to drive to your uncle Arthur's."

"Uncle won't see you mother, he's in bed all cut up, he told me to tell you he couldn't see anyone to-day, that crazy creature

beat him badly.'

"Do as I bid," commanded the mother imperatively, the two straight lines deepening between her dark brows, always a sign of unpleasant thought as well as stern resolve.

Notwithstanding the prohibition she gained access to her brother's room. She found him in bed, his head swathed in a

wet towel.

"How do you account for the woman's conduct Arthur?" asked his sister, "why should a stranger wish to hurt you? she did not come to steal, did she?"

"How should I know? you can't expect me to understand the

motives of a drunken woman, can you?"

"And you would not have her arrested? Why she may come at

you again."

"Of course she may, in fact I look for her every minute," replied Mr. Arthur maliciously hoping to frighten his sister

"Then why not set the police on her track?"

"Do you suppose I'd like to get my name in the papers mixed

up with a drunken drab's?"

He spoke so irritably his sister let the subject drop, but took up one even more irritating, She said she had been anxious to see him about that note, she needed the money badly-Jackson's expenses at school were heavy, if he could not pay the whole, half would be a help; he shook his head gloomily and finally confessed that he was dead broke, that he could not raise a thousand dollars to save his life.

"What can you have done with your property?" she asked, white and pale. "Is \$5000 so large a sum you cannot raise it?

Does not your Broadway property bring good rents?"
"Good or bad it is nothing to me" said her brother gloom-"Nothing to you?" gasped the sister.
"Nothing. It is lost to me—mortgaged."

"And your house on Water street?"

"Eaten up with mortgages."

"What went with the money?"

There was no reply.

"Your Uncle Ned lost every dime he got from his father by cards—he was burried by his relations; are you leading the same life?" she asked with a stern white face.

"He lived while he did live-what's the use of having a cake if you can't eat it?"

"Only a fool will gorge every crumb of his cake one day to

starve the next" she replied bitterly.

Mrs. Singleton was ten years older than her brother and had been more of a mother to him than a sister. She asked him what his plans were? how did he expect to maintain himself. He said if he could only raise money to begin on he knew he could retrieve his losses, he had been cleaned out by the sharpers of Baden-Baden, and had lately been studying the science of cards and felt sure that he could not only win back what he had lost but increase his fortunes, all he wanted was a few thousands cash to operate on. His sister listened to this aghast. It seemed like lunacy to her. As he talked of winning, of his understanding the science of cards, his whole aspect changed, his eyes lighted up, his cheeks flushed, hope illuminated his countenance.

"Win back your money? Good heavens! Arthur, surely you do not expect to get your living by gambling? Are you mad enough to fancy you can grow rich by what has made you poor?"

"That's the logic of a woman." said he contemptuously, "if I lost, did not some other man win? Why may not I win just as another man? I've studied the cards—I've thought over the games-I now understand the chances-I see through the whole thing-I feel certain I will succeed if only I had money to start on."

"It may be a gentlemanly thing to play cards as a pastime, but do you think, Arthur, it is a gentlemanly business to gamble for a living?"

"How else am I to get it?" he indignantly asked "do you expect me to go out and shovel coal for a living? I can't work and I won't work—now how am I to live will you please tell

me? Do you want me to kill myself out of the way?"

This sort of absurd talk his sister thought it useless to notice. She sat silent for some moments, the two lines deepening and darkening between her oblique brows. When she spoke it was very gently. She said there was a way by which he might retrieve his fortunes—a gentlemanly way that would not bring dishonor on his name. He said he'd like to hear of it, but she might just as well understand he wasn't going into any disagreeable plebeian work—he wasn't one of the sort to do drudging work, and he never intended to try.

"You are past thirty Arthur, but you are much handsomer

than most men at twenty, some men utilize their beauty."

Mr. Arthur laughed, "Oh" he said "you want me to hunt a rich wife! Where will I find the article? Trot her out! If she's not too hard looking I'll take her. But you know Cathy, I am no marrying man, no matter who or what she is, it will be a tremendous sacrifice on my part."

"Every rose has its thorns," sagely remarked his sister glad

to see the cheerful way he met the idea.

"Well! have you any prize in view?" "What will you say to a rich widow?"

"You know I detest widows-but a fellow in my fix I suppose

can't be too choice."

"I should think not; a widow with a pile of cash, and no encumbrances, no father to tie up her property, will be worth your attention Arthur."

"The cash pile certainly will be—Who is she Cathy?"
"Do you remember old Tubinger, the rich old bachelor who made his money by building and investing his gains in city property—now very valuable?"

"You don't want me to marry old Tubinger, do you?"

"Old Tubinger married a woman a few years ago, a woman from Canaan-Four-Corners, a little town in Connecticut, just across the line. Her husband dropped down with apoplexy a year after his marriage, and left every dollar he had to his wife. She and I were at the same sea-side place last Summer. I thought about you, and we struck up a great friendship. I showed her your picture, and she thinks you are very handsome."
"I wish I had seen her picture, and thought her very hand-

"She is considered a fine-looking woman."

"I detest your fine-looking women, they are always stout and red-faced. I don't think I would be apt to fancy the sort of a

woman old Tubinger would select."

"How would you like a young girl, dark, slender, lady-like, but no beauty?" she asked, as the vision of Melissa's schoolmate rose before her memory."

"Much money?"

"An heiress, the only grandchild of a wealthy Southern planter."

"Give me the girl—always a girl before a stout, red-faced wo-

"But the girl waits for a dead man's shoes; the widow al-

ready has the shoes."

It was finally agreed that the fastidious Mr. Arthur was, if possible, to see and inspect these two eligible ladies, and make his choice between them. His sister was to contrive to have

them at her house to tea some evening.

"What you want, Arthur," she said, rising to leave, "what every gentleman of your position and disposition wants, is a settled income; it would not at all suit you to live by the hazard of cards. You may enjoy the excitement of play, Arthur but to depend on it for support will not do-positively it will not."

CHAPTER XII.

THEORIES AND EXPERIMENTS.

As we have said, Calyx had been reading works on mesmer

ism, and had become deeply interested in the subject. He held theories as to the possibllity of utilizing the discovery; a little practice had convinced him that he himself possessed the power to mesmerise in an extraordinary degree. There was another subject in which the student's mind was deeply interested, and this was the search for the cause and cure of that wide-spread disease which afflicts the human family, alcoholism, so wide-spread, so universal, indeed, that many have come to be-

lieve it the result of a natural taste.

Calyx's mind at once jumped at the conclusion that it was not possible that a natural instinct, or taste, would be implanted in any creature which certainly leads it to ruin and death. All natural tastes tend to the preservation of the creature. Starting thus, with the proposition that the craving for stimulus is not natural, it follows that it is caused by some violation of natural laws, begun by our ignorant projenitors, in the dark ages when the struggle for sustenance was the all-engrossing work of their lives, he bent his mind to search for the cause and cure of this unnatural craving which leads to drink and misery, disease and death. His own family had suffered so severely from this disease, his own childhood had been made wretched, his sister's life ruined, his mother broken hearted; all this made it the one theme forever present in his mind. Even in his sleep the problem was at work, pushing itself through his brain, until at last his soul cried ont "Eureka!" and he really believed that he had

found the root of the evil, and the cure.

Calyx never had mentioned these topics to his fellow students, Wilmer and Charlmonte. He felt that they would not sympathize with his ideas; it was the dream and the hope of his life, one day to be able to test his theories as to the cause of drunkenness, and of eliminating from the system of the drunkard, the disease which causes the craving for drink. The only confident he made of his plans and hopes was his sister, the little, pale, patient seamstress, who had acted as a mother to him since his own mother had died of a broken heart and broken hopes. Keziah, his sister, was twelve years his senior, a patient listener, an indefatigable worker, but she had no enthusiasm. In her secret soul she thought her brother's theories were boyish talk, and nothing more. So it was a rather disagreeable surprise to her when he knocked on her door, on the night he walked away with the half-crazed woman and took that woman in the house. Poor Keziah was aghast at the sight. The lodgings they occupied were small and humble, only three small rooms, or rather closets, one for the sister, one for the brother, and one to cook and eat in. Where could she put this great, strong, reckless creature—this half-crazed woman? What if she should become frenzied, and rave, and tear the household things to fragments? As Keziah gazed upon her she thought it quite likely something of the sort would occur, but her brother relieved her of this anxiety by his mesmeric power over the woman. After some effort

he soothed her nervous excitement, and put her in a profound

sleep.

"She'll do, Keziah," said the student, contemplating his patient as she sat in stone-like sleep. "I have long wanted a subject; if I can cure her of drink, she'll do. We must keep her tonight. I shall see her father early in the morning, and get from him money to assist in taking care of her until she is restored to her natural health."

On seeing the picture in the locket, Calyx had recognized the daughter of a wealthy wine merchant, in whose family his sister had once worked as a seamstress; the girl had run away from home to hide her shame. Her father had forbidden her name mentioned, and while Keziah was in the house, the girl's mother, on learning that her daughter had become a mother, begged to be allowed to see her and give her some sympathy and assistance. The father sternly forbade, and the girl disappeared from the city, and had not been heard from since. Keziah had in her possession a miniature of the girl, the duplicate of the portrait in the locket. It was these pictures which enabled Calyx to recognize the woman whose appearance was so changed, even those who knew her personally would hardly have recognized her as the once fair, handsome, sunny-faced creature she had been at sixteen.

Calyx procured the money from the wine merchant, although he frankly told the student he wished he had let her die in the street—"Such women are not worth saving," he said. Elated at his success so far, Calyx set to work in dead earnest; he had the money, he had the subject.

The wine merchant agreed to give him an allowance of fifty dollars per month as long as he kept the woman in his house, and brutally expressed the hope that she might never get out until

she was carried feet foremost to the grave.

It was no easy work, but Calyx's whole soul delighted in it. So strong was his faith in final success, so strong his faith in the reformation of public opinion, which the propogation and practice of his theories would work in the world, so strong his faith in the great good that would result to humanity, that he delighted in the work from which many others would have shrunk as not only disagreeable, but horrible. His first care was to enlarge his lodging place by the acquisition of three other rooms, these three were devoted to the use of the patient; one served as a bed room; one was fitted up as a bath room, a large tub, in which his patient could lie down at full length, hot and cold water in abundance was supplied. Two stout working women were hired as attendants, a supply of fruits and vegetables was laid These were the munitions by which he meant to wage war on the spirit of alcohol which had gained possession of his pa-Although he had the woman under lock and key, although he knew in all the wide world there was not one to interfere, or seek to rescue her from him, he knew that the great enemy, Alcohol, would fight for her possession; he knew that although bolts and bars held her in, still, Alcohol ruled her; her body was a citadel in which the dreadful spirit of Drink was intrenched, every part and atom of that body, every nerve and tissue and muscle was permeated, and pervaded, and ruled by

the Spirit of Alcohol.

In that grandest and gloomiest of modern poems, Manfred, the poet calls up the spirit of many material things, the earth, the air, the mountain, the star which ruled the unhappy Manfred's destiny; each and all, and more than these, possessed an active, sentient spirit, strong, whether for good or for evil. There was a spirit of the wind, and a spirit of the earthquake, of the hurricane and the volcano. Notwithstanding this liberal number of spirits, the poet's soul cried out for others:

"Oh! that I were The viewless spirit of a lovely sound!"

All this may be only the poet's fancy, but who can say that material things are not filled and governed by spirit force? Who does not know that in alcohol, no matter what name it bears, what color or shape it assumes, there exists a subtle, invisible, insidious, treacherous, and most malignant spirit, which, once gaining entrance into the human stomach, makes of it a citadel, entrenches itself therein, sends forth along every nerve and artery its fiery cohorts to permeate and possess the whole system and never rests in its evil work until every atom of the body is under its sway and then the wretched victim finds that he is possessed by an inappeasable demon which rules him with despotic power, which, sometimes swiftly, sometimes slowly, but always surely, drives him on to disease, degradation and death. It was to exorcise this dreadful spirit that the young student bent his mind, he began the work with all the enthusiasm of a theorist and the bold confidence of youth.

"I shall send my cohorts through every nerve and tissue of her body," he said, "to drive out the demon's; the molecules of her blood, brain, muscles, nerves and glands shall be puri-

fied."

"How will you do it?" asked the little mild Keziah; in her secret heart she had no particle of faith in her brothers schemes.

"How? do you not see my preparations?" with a wave of his hand toward the bathing apparatus.

Keziah looked around in mild expectancy.

"I see nothing, Calvin, but a bath tub and water supplies."

"Nothing?" he cried, turning into the tub the steaming hot water, "you see what will work a great revolution in the medical world. These molecules of hot water shall penetrate every part of her poisoned being and drive out the poison—you shall see how it will work like a charm."

"But how will you control her? how make her obey you?"

She is half crazy—crazy people are not easily managed."

"I can control her; never fear, she will be like clay in the

potter's hands."

And, in fact, so it proved, to a certain degree. When the woman was aroused and offered food to eat, the old frenzy was alive and possessed her. She could not eat, she wanted drink, her hands trembled, her eyes had in them that miserably anxious, craving expression, common to inebriates on waking from a drunken sleep. At first she could not remember how and why she had come to that house. She pushed her chair from the table, and fixed her eyes painfully upon her host and hostess.

"Who are you, and why am I here?" she demanded, shaking

all over.

Calyx explained that the lady was his sister, that he was a medical man, that she was ill, and they were her friends.

"Friends! Only mad women hope to find friends—I am not

quite mad yet."

"You are not mad, but sick—you are my patient. I mean to

restore you to the health you enjoyed at sixteen."

"If you are a doctor you must know that I need a stimulant. I am shaken and shattered—a dose of brandy, or whiskey, or gin, will tone me up."

"If you were bitten by a mad dog, and suffered from the poi-

son of the bite, would you wish to be bitten again?"

"Give me something, I care not what, but something to kill or quiet the devil that is here—here! (striking her breast with

her hand) Kill it, even if you kill me with it!"

"Try and hold yourself still, perfectly still (he now had possession of both her hands, and held them gently but firmly in his own), make an effort, bring your will to life, your will lies dormant, drowned and drunk in alcohol, wake it up, give it courage and power, and you will regain your freedom from the despotism of Drink. Courage is what you need."

She tore her hands away. Memory of last night's occurrences

rushed upon her.

"You are false—false, as all men are! You have broken your word to me, and you have made me break my word to myself—I swore that last night should be my last on earth. You promised me poison—you have mocked my misery and made game of my despair!"

"You are wrong, you are mistaken, utterly. I have broken no faith with you. You shall keep your promise to yourself—you said you would end your bad life, and you have ended it. You will now begin a better. Quiet yourself. Sleep, sleep

sleep."

"I can never sleep until you quiet the mad rage for drink—the hungry devil in here—here! (again striking her breast) here! where a nest of serpents live, and sting, and burn, and bite; only drink puts them to sleep, only drink stops their hungry rage."

A strange thought, like an inspiration, flashed upon the student's brain. There was a legend in the Calyx family that one

of their female ancestors had been burned as a witch, and the portrait of this witch-woman had descended to living representatives; it had often been observed that our young student strongly resembled his witch ancestress. Since Calyx had discovered himself to possess that mysterious power over others, called mesmeric, thoughts of the witch-woman continually haunted his mind. He dreamed of her by night, and often caught himself contemplating her picture, the eyes of which seemed to possess a weird power. The sudden thought came to him at that instant, and he felt as if it came from the weird eyes of the witch which watched him from the wall.

"Very well," he said, "you shall have the drink, you shall kill and forever quiet the serpents in your breast. Keziah, be so kind as to bring me a glass of that burning, boiling drink in

the vessel on the stove?"

The wondering but obedient Keziah poured from the tea kettle on the stove, into a glass, clear, hot water, as hot as some people drink their coffee. She gave it to her brother, he held it up and eyed it critically. The woman gazed at it with curious

nervous eagerness. She reached her shaking hand for it.
"It is very strong," he said, still eying it like a connoisseur in liquors. "Smell it; look at it; what a fine bead! what an aroma! in all this land there is no liquid equal to this; oh! this will tone you up (holding it high out of the reach of her eager hand), this will quiet your nerves and set your heart to dancing with delight. Wait a moment I fear you cannot stand so much, I fear it will make you drunk, it is very powerful, very penetrating. liquid." Oh! you do not know the Power that lives in this

"I know! I know! give it—the stronger the better. Give it! give

it! give it!" she reached after it eagerly.

"There—Drink! Drink!"

By the time the last word was out of the student's mouth the last drop was down the woman's throat; she quaffed the hot water with as much eager gusto as if it had been the best French brandy.

The little mild seamstress looked on in mild horror. In her little mild heart there had for some time lurked a sort of suspicion that some of the witch ancestor's mysterious power had descended to her brother but she had never ventured to give it voice.

Strange to say the water seemed to exercise precisely the effect the woman had expected brandy would produce. The intense craving look in her eyes abated, a more satisfied expression took its place, her trembling limbs seemed to gain strength, her nerves firmness.

"Drink is the medicine for misery; this has helped me-more

will help me more," she said in good faith.

"Keziah bring another dram," ordered the student himself amazed at the phenomenon exhibited, "but not as much as the first or we may make her drunk."

"The drunker the better," said the woman, "drunk is death, sober is life, death is what I want."

"Death? and you have no fear of that hell to which self-mur-

derers go?" asked the student.

"Hell is here," she cried striking her hand on her breast, "here is the hell we fly from. Give me more."

This happened on the first day of the woman's stay in Calyx's house but not always was she so tractable, there were times when she became frantic to escape and destroy herself; she would nave rushed to the river, or swallowed poison, or beat her head against the wall had she not been restrained; she saw snakes and devils and malignant men in her room; sometimes she would fight these intruders with great fury, at other times, terror-struck and trembling, she would cower in corners to escape their grasp or evade their eyes. Calyx knew that according to the prescribed treatment of the learned medical faculty he should have allayed the frenzy of the disease by moderate doses of the same poison that produced it; this he had resolved he would not do.

"Doctors do not cure the mania-a-potu or the delirium-tremens," he said, 'they do not eradicate the disease from the system, do not free it from the desire for drink, they only pull the patient through the excess, the heat and fury of the disease and leave him with every atom of his being in such a condition of suffering he immediately falls into his old ways of drink and soon has another attack; I shall destroy the very taste for the

damned stuff."

His only agent was water, inside and outside, water. When a frenzy seized her she was immersed in a hot bath, full length, her head only was left out it being supported by a broad leather strap across one end of the tub. She was forcibly held in this hot bath and cold water applied to her head until the worst symptoms abated and calmness was restored. At every renewal of the frenzy the hot plunge was repeated. She was made to swallow hot water by the pint-more than she had ever swallowed whiskey, as one of her attendants remarked.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. ARTHUR INSPECTS THE TWO WEALTHY WOMEN AND MAKES HIS CHOICE.

The two young girls, Miss Smidge and Miss Rosa Amelia Bickford, stood at the Institute front window watching for the coming of the Smidge family carriage, which was to convey them to the Smidge family mansion to partake of a Smidge family feast. A carriage drove up, but not the carriage they looked for.
"As I live!" exclaimed Miss Smidge, "its M'liss Mopson's

aunt come again! Isn't she getting good? She was here only

yesterday."

Then the two ran down the hall to tell Miss Mopson that her aunt had come. They found Miss Mopson reading a novel, her eyes red with weeping over the woes of the heroine.

"How ever you can cry over a book, I can't see," cried Miss Smidge. "I never cry unless I mash my finger with a hammer,

or somebody steps on my toes."

"It's all foolishness to cry all by yourself," softly said Rosa Amelia. "What's the use? I cry when I want to make Mamma and Papa give in, that's the way I got my pink silk. Mamma said I had enough dresses—I just went off and cried a little, and Mamma and Papa felt so sorry for me they gave right in, and kissed me and sent off and got the silk, and Madam Flushing made it up, it's just too sweet!"

Here Kitty came in with three cards. One was for Miss Mopson, the girls looked at the others and opened their eyes in

amazement.

"Why, whatever does she mean, Mopsy! She don't know

those Island girls!"

"She never saw them 'till I introduced them yesterday." said Miss Mopson sadly, as she smoothed her hair with her hands.

Miss Smidge and Miss Rosa Amelia ran to the Island girls'

room, but the young ladies could give no explanation.

"We'll know when we see the lady," said Miss Charlmonte, as

she and her cousin started down stairs.

"I'm going to see too," cried Miss Smidge, "I'm dying to know what M'liss Mopson's aunt wants with those two girls she never saw before. Come on, Rosa, the parlor is free to us all."

"What now?" asked the little Rosa, pulling back.

"Yes, now. I lost my handkerchief, I'm going to look for it," and down the steps she scampered and went into the parlor, where the elegant Mrs Singleton sat in all the grandeur of vel-

vets and plumes and furs.

Behind the sofas, among the music books, under the chairs, in the windows, Miss Smidge searched for the handkerchief, and listened to the fine lady, and cut her eyes at the girls to see how they received what Miss Smidge thought was wonderful, viz: an invitation to tea, and the still more wonderful information that they, the Island girls, were such dear, dear friends of Melissa Mopson, Melissa had so often talked to her, said the fine lady, of her lovely young friends, she felt gratified at making their acquaintance, and as her niece was going to take tea with her the next evening, she was glad of an opportunity to please her niece and gratify herself by inviting her niece's lovely friends to spend the evening with her. Melissa was really so anxious, etc., etc., and her carriage would call for the young ladies.

Miss Charlmonte was overwhelmed with astonishment, it was the first intimation she or her cousin had had of Miss Mopson's attachment to them; on the contrary, they had all along fancied Miss Mopson did not like them. Miss Charlmonte began to make excuses, she was stopped by entreaties. The young ladies really must oblige, Melissa's evening would be spoiled if they failed to come—really, they must not stand on ceremony, they must look on her as an old friend. She was extremely fond of noise and of young people, she had no daughters of her own, she would take no denial. So she kissed all three and sailed out like a princess.

Miss Smidge darted out and flew up stairs, breathless and ea-

ger to discuss the singular occurrence with her friend.

The idea of M'lss Mopson loving those Island girls! why, she fairly hates 'em, I know she does!"

"But why did her aunt say so then?" asked the bewildered

Rosa Amelia, totally unable to penetrate the mystery.

"Here comes M'liss, maybe she can explain. M'liss, how happened you never before let out how much you loved the Island girls? Why, how sweet you are! what do you mean? As I live, she has been at it again."

The first part of the sentence was screamed down the stairway, over the balusters, to Miss Mopson, who was on the lower steps, slowly coming up. The latter part referred to the fresh

tears Miss Smidge saw in that young lady's eyes.

The carriage came and the three girls were driven to Mrs. Singleton's residence, which was some distance from the Institute. They were received with affectionate cordiality and kisses by the handsome lady, and polite admiration by the handsome boys. There was a very fine piano on which it was a treat to play, after having used the old rattle-trap at the Institute. Miss Mopson preferred the guitar, The guitar had a broad blue ribbon to hang over the performer's neck. Miss Mopson thought the ribbon becoming, and besides she only loved to warble gentle little love ditties of a tearful, melancholy nature.

After the girls had had their tea and played until they were tired, the door opened and two visitors came in like a gust of wind, both were so full and overflowing with animal life. The one was a lady of about thirty-five years, a large, stout form, full ruddy face, beaming and glowing with cheerfulness and happiness. This was Mrs. Amelia Tubinger. The gentleman was her nephew, no other than the promising young lawyer, Blackstone Coke Sharpe, Esq. Mrs. Tubinger gushingly kissed her dear friend, Mrs. Singleton, and when introduced to the girls gave each one a resounding smack on the cheek and said "she was awfully glad to see 'em."

Mrs. Singleton and Mrs. Tubinger sat together on a sofa in friendly talk, the three young girls occupied another sofa, before which the young aspirant to the White House planted himself, to the exclusion of the two boys, who were modestly seated at either end of the sofa, satisfied to have the beauty of Miss Ash-

ford to gaze upon.

The young lawyer, in all the pride of a stubby beard, which grew so thick and coase he shaved it off every day, quite ignored

the presence of the boys, they were too juvenile to rank with men. Mr. Sharpe laid himself out to entertain, he could not have taken more trouble had he been addressing a jury, his conversation took a wide and sweeping range. Poetry, romance, painting, sculpture, theaters, schools, churches, earth, air and water, each and all received a dash and a splash from the fine oratorical fancy of the young lawyer. Miss Mopson listened entranced, she felt that no hero of romance, not even the all-accomplished and fascinating Lord Mortimer himself, could have talked more beautifully. In one of the pauses he made, seeing a rather abstracted look in Miss Charlmonte's eyes, he cried out briskly.

"A penny for your thoughts, Miss Charlmonte."

The girl said she could not sell her thoughts so cheaply, and asked what he would think if any one of his clients were to offer him a poor little penny for his thoughts.

"Very good! ha! ha! ha! very good indeed! Quite a legal mind, Miss Charlmonte. Upon my word, very good! ha!

ha! ha!"

The Island girls laughed out. His hilarity was catching. There was something refreshing in the bold self-confidence and self-satisfaction of the young man. They laughed with him and at him. Miss Mopson saw nothing to laugh at, she listened and

looked in tearful admiration.

He asked the girls if they had read Bulwer's last novel. Miss Charlmonte replied that it was against the Institute laws to read novels, she confessed, however, that the laws were sometimes broken and a novel was now and then smuggled into the house. Whereupon Miss Mopson, feeling guilty, as at that very moment the tear-stained history of the "Children of the Abby" was lying under her pillow, blushed beneath the bold black eyes of the young lawyer, who perceived and received the blush as a tribute to his own charms. He smiled approvingly on the timid Miss Mopson, who blushed more vividly than before.

Miss Ashford wondered how the young lawyer found time to read so many novels and so much law too, she had always had the idea that law was a most exacting profession, her uncle in Charleston had been a lawyer, and her mamma had often said

that he had killed himself by over work.

The young fellow was immensely proud of his profession, nothing pleased him so much as an opportunity to "blow" about

it to the ignorant.

"Quite right, Miss Ashford, quite right. It's a tremendous profession—tremendous—immense pressure on the brain—immense! Lawyers, ladies, couldn't get on without the midnight oil, positively couldn't."

The young ladies murmured something that was accepted as

encouragement, and the young lawyer continued.

"Now, there's Bulwer's last novel, ladies, just finished-splendid work-splendid! (Here Mr. Sharpe's heavy black brows

knotted themselves together severely, and the merry black eyes took on a look of dark and deep profundity) A work, ladies, founded on a celebrated case in the courts of England—a criminal case—rather too severe a subject for the—ha!—(all of a sudden the deep and dark profundity disappeared and gave place to the bright, merry look)—rather too severe for the female mind—too legal-too abstruse. It has been observed by philosophers, ladies, and by statesmen, that the female mind—fond of flowers and fancies—ha! not at all suited—not adapted to the severe regions of the law—ha! Am I right, ladies?"

Something was again murmured by the girls which encouraged Mr. Sharpe in the belief that he was right, and he resumed

his instructive remarks,

"From the earliest periods it has been observed that the female mind, naturally prone to poetry, love, romance (here the bold, black eyes happened to rest on the wonnering and admiring blue orbs of Miss Mopson, who blushed vividly)—poetry, love, romance—naturally suited to your charming sex—is by no

means fitted to tackle the-abstruseness of the law."

This logical proposition meeting with approval from the three female minds present, Mr. Blackstone Coke Sharpe stretched himself back in his chair both hands thrust deep down in his pockets, and looked from that lofty intellectual eminence, down on the trio of female minds before him, that sort of good humored, indulgent expression in his merry black eyes, which great men exhibit when viewing with indulgence the antics of children.

Miss Mopson's little heart beat, and her little face flushed beneath his glance. Miss Charlmonte ventured to remark that if the laws were all written down in plain English perhaps even

female minds might comprehend them.

"A very natural mistake, ladies, a very natural mistake for the female mind to fall into—very, indeed; but to us—to the great men of the profession—I assure you, it's quite the reverse—quite so, indeed; to us, law is as plain as A B C—fully as plain. The framers of our system of law, ladies—if I may be pardoned for speaking of so abstruse a subject to such fair auditors—according to my view of it, kept one object steadily in view, viz: first and foremost, above all other things, ladies, they strove to lift and hold the law above the common people. How could that best be done? Evidently by elevating it into a difficult and intricate study, entirely too difficult and too intricate for the comprehension of the common mind. Now, I put it to you, ladies, if the laws were laid down so that he who runs may read, what would become of our great profession? We lawyers, with Othello, would exclaim, 'Our occupation's gone.' You catch the idea, ladies? You comprehed?"

Miss Mopson blushed, and the other girls murmured something to the effect that Mr. Blackstone C. Sharpe made the matter so plain that even feeble female minds caught glimpses of

his meaning,

"We understand, Mr. Sharpe," said Miss Charlmonte sympathetically, "you do not wish your profession injured by putting it down to the comprehension of everybody, especially of the fe-

male mind."

"Exactly; you hit the nail on the head, ladies—exactly. Your remark, ladies, bring to mind an observation made by a profound philosopher, relative to the female mind—very profound (here for an instant came on one of Mr. Sharp's sternest looks), who observed that though the female mind be incapable of (darkly stern)—of abstract reason or logic, it can, in fact, as a compensation, it does possess the power to perceive intuitively—to pierce, if I may so express myself, to the very arcana of science by intuition. In short (here the sternness fied and the jovial expression returned) in short, ladies, it may be said, man reasons, and woman—lovely woman (a look at Miss Mopson), is all heart and soul—man, all intellect and reason."

After a few minutes silent enjoyment of the situation, Mr.

Sharpe resumed:

"Now ladies, if you please, if you will permit me, ladies (with a gallant bow to the trio, he hardly seemed conscious of the existence of the boys) I will make this plain to your comprehension."

The young ladies expressed thanks, and Mr. Sharpe hauled from his pocket a package of papers, and took thence one of formidable proportions, being twelve or fifteen pages of legal cap, closely covered with writing; said paper being a conveyance of a small house and lot, from John Pudding, Esq., to Samuel Bagg, for the sum of one thousand two hundred and fifty dollars, cash down. The young ladies gazed at the formidable pa-

per, in wonder at what would next come.

"Now," said the young man, holding up the paper that all might see and admire, his black eyes beaming first on the paper then on his auditors, with something of the air of a conjurer who says, "Keep your eyes open and you'll see wonders," "now, ladies, look at this paper! Well, I dare say, if I should read it to you, it would sound like Greek or Choctaw, or any other gibberish, yet, to the legal mind, it is as plain as A B C, it is got up strictly after the legal style, in fact, I wrote it myself."

"Then," said Miss Ashford, with a sweet smile, "if you wrote

it it is bound to be nice."

"On my soul, I wrote it. It's for this, ladies, we burn the midnight oil—hard (here the darkly stern look took the place of the beaming)—the very hardest study, ladies, fetches a paper like that."

Miss Charlmonte and Miss Ashford both said, "Indeed!" They were glad to know about it, and if not too much trouble, they would like to have Mr. Sharpe read the paper, and then translate it into plain English.

Mr. Sharpe beamed and glowed upon them. It was highly gratifying to him to see female minds exhibit interest in sub-

jects of such importance—highly gratifying, and highly commendable. Anything to please the ladies—he would take great pleasure, though he gave them warning it would prove Choctaw. Then with a confident air and stentorian tones, the young man read aloud the deed of conveyance, taking great delight in its circumlocution, its repetitions, its numerous "whereases" and "first parties" and "second parties," and "to have and to hold," "heirs and consigns" and other words that ornament legal documents. When through he asked if they had any idea what it all meant.

"But you know, you promised to translate it, Mr. Sharpe," said

Miss Ashford politely.

"Oh! you must tell us what it means," said her cousin.

"Do-please," murmured Miss Mopson, and then blushed un-

der the beaming and bold black eyes.

"Oh! that's easily done," cried the beaming young man, "that can be done in few words, no trouble at all about that—it only means that one, John Pudding, Esq., sells to one, Samuel Bogg, Esq., a small house and lot for twelve hundred and fifty

dollars, cash down—that's all."

And the young fellow glowed upon them with such pride and gratification in the learning displayed in the lengthy document, that the amiable Miss Ashford, with good-natured intent to keep full his cup of pleasure, expressed great wonder at the learning necessary to legal work. Miss Carlmonte said that it was now clear to her mind why the use of plain language, such as ordinary people would understand, would ruin the profession.

nary people would understand, would ruin the profession.

At this instant Mr. Arthur Singleton entered the room, his sister came forward and introduced him to the two Island girls and the widow Tubinger, and this was the beginning of an acquaintance that was destined to grow to a greater intimacy than the Island girls dreamed of, for Mrs. Singleton would take no denial, and insisted that the girls should return next Friday. The boys would be off at school, she would be all by herself—they must take pity upon a lonely woman, and give her a little noise at least once a week. So, to their own surprise, when the two Island girls were put in the carriage with their hostess' niece, they felt themselves bound by an engagement for the next Friday. All three were silent and reflective during the drive.

"We should have refused," said Miss Ashford, in the privacy

of their own room.

"Where is the harm?" said the more adventurous Roma. "That piano is a great temptation. We will improve twice as fast in our music."

"But we know nothing of them, they are strangers to us,"

urged the more cautious cousin.

"We'll make Ed call for us next Friday, and he'll know all about it. I really want Ed to know that delightful Mr. Sharpe."
"And how about the elegant Mr. Singleton? He seemed very

attentive to you, Roma."

"And very attentive to Mrs. Tubinger. Aunt and nephew are both refreshing."

"Yes; as a great gust of wind. They are a handsome fam-

ily."

"The Tubingers?"

"No; the Singletons; all of them handsome. I do not ex-

actly admire the style though."

"Why not?" asked Miss Roma, "It's a very distingue style. She looks like a French Marquise of the old regime, the boys are both handsome, and their uncle too."

"But there is something I don't exactly like," persisted the beauty. "Their eyes are all too close together. I like broad

eyes."

"Broad eyes! I never saw a broad eye."

"You know what I mean—broad between the eyes."

That night Mr. Arthur informed his sister that, by all means, the girl was his preference, and that indefatigable sister made up her mind that she would leave no stone unturned to bring her scheme to a successful issue. In order to do this the girl must be had at her house as often as possible, as her brother could not visit the Institute; meanwhile she cautiously determined not altogether to lose sight of the widow who already had the dead man's shoes.

CHAPTER XIV.

degree on the least work a wind the furthern the said that it was an

DOLLY AND THE LOCKSMITH.

About the middle of March the small tenement house in which Dolly and the Gaff family lodged had very few occupants. Carson had long disappeared, the Gaff family (after the death of the Gaff man of a pleurisy caught by exposure during a drunken spree) had been assisted by friends and moved to the country where they raised chickens and potatoes for the market. Dolly still retained her room and acted as agent to show the rooms to persons in search of lodgings. It was on a warm day that Dolly sat at her window sunning herself and singing at the top of her voice, swaying her lean body back and forth to the music of her song. She was engaged in the pleasing occupation of patching a flannel petticoat but she was not so intent either on her sewing or her singing as not to be aware that she was closely watched by the enemy over the way. Dolly had an instinctive knowledge that her songs and her presence at the window was annoying to the "Arish 'ooman," therefore she had raised the window so that as much as possible of the sound and the sight might annoy. Ever and anon, without pausing, the negress would slyly from the corners of her eyes dart a glance over the way, at such times she caught glimpses of the red-haired Mike and his lugubrious mama, as Dolly imagined, looking wrathfully

distressed; this so encouraged her she lifted up her voice higher and swayed her body with more fervor. After exhausting her repertoire of religious songs Dolly broke forth with one of those wierd African wails sometimes sung at corn-shuckings or gatherings of a funereal nature. These African songs were especially offensive to Mrs. Flood who firmly believed they were inspired by the devil himself.

DOLLY'S AFRICAN WAIL.

T:

Way down in Eboe! way down in Eboe!
Oh! dar is de wustes' o' de wus' niggah pens,
Chock full up wid 'oomens; chock full up wid mens,
Dey's druv by de fifties; dey's druv by de tens,
Way down in Eboe! way down in Eboe!

II. ook syisserge

De Guinees is dar, an' de Naugees too,
Dar niggars is sole a big 'bacca chew,
Sole for buttons, sole for beads, sole for new par shoe,
Way down in Eboe! way down in Eboe!

III.

De white man he come wid de drink made o' fiah, De black man he drinked, he drinked widout tiah, He fall dis way, an' dat way, in de sof' miah, Way down in Eboe! way down in Eboe!

IV.

He wake up, he see de wide watah all roun',
He heah it a roah, he heah, too, de soun',
Ob de niggahs a moanin' an' groanin' all roun',
Way down in Eboe! way down in Eboe!

V.

De babies is dar, at der black mammies' breas', Oh! little dey knows, while takin' der res', O' de troubles an' mubbles a comin' ter press; Way down in Eboe! way down in Eboe!

VI.

Oh! de niggah he long fur de lan' lef' behin', De lan' o' de lion, whar de hottes' sun shine, De lan' o' de tigahs, de lan' o' his kin', Way down in Eboe! way down in Eboe!

"Fetch the blasted nager!" muttered Mrs. Flood on whom this outlandish wail made a very disagreeable impression, "she's the divil's darter; no christian cratur ever howled that way afore."

The good woman's attention was diverted a moment from her black enemy to a little barefooted urchin with tattered hat and hands thrust deep into his pockets, who, with the bold independence of a millionaire, demanded to be supplied with "three cents wuth o' taffy candy." The candy was delivered, the young millionaire marched out one hand still in one pocket, the other

holding the taffy to his mouth in the full enjoyment of its sweetness. Once more alone Mrs. Flood again cast her eyes over to the enemy's side. The enemy's voice had ceased its song, the body its swayings, the black lips were dropped apart, the restless eyes were fixed and staring on an object which was directly in front of the negress' open window. This object was a very ordinary looking individual wearing a rough working coat and a cloth cap—a short, thick-set man with a heavy face and heavy, slow eyes, complexion hair and eyes all of a dull, clayey color. This individual carried in his hand a little old fashioned trunk covered with untanned cow skin, tied up with a rope in default of a lock and key, the rope serving as a handle.

Dolly stared at the man and the man's heavy eyes were fixed on Dolly.

on Dony.

"So you know me?" said the man putting that interpretation on the negress' expressive face.

With that instinct of cunning which seems to be innate in the African nature, in an instant Dolly retrieved the mistake she had made by exhibiting surprise in the recognition of the man. By some occult power she drew down over her little, restless eyes a glaze of dullness and stupidity.

"Know you?" she muttered, looking at the man through that dull glaze, "how you spec I gwine know a pusson I neber lay

eyes on afore?"

Now this strategy would have failed to deceive notwithstanding the perfectly natural way in which it was executed, had the man been able to divine any possible motive which could induce Dolly to deny that she had ever seen him before. The absence of motive made him fall into the trap. It did not occur to him him that it might be the woman's natural instinct to hide and that she might act on that instinct without motive.

"You never saw me before?" asked the man, completely taken in by Dolly's inimitable acting and thinking to himself "what

fools these niggers be."

"Neber as I knows on," replied the negress slowly shaking her head from side to side at the same time steadily and stolidly looking in the man's face—lying so like truth it seemed truth itself. She knew the man to be Carson, the dissipated lock-

smith, the moment she set her eyes upon him.

What inherited instinct, from what cause begun on her remote ancestors, operating on her progenitors from generation to generation, had prompted this deception without any definite object in view, we leave to the Biologists and Psychologists to explain. We only record the fact that, without any definite motive, any hope of gain or benefit to herself, the negress acted on the instinct of secretiveness and denied that she had ever before seen Carson, the locksmith, for he it was, although she perfectly well remembered him and remembered the conversation to which she had secretly listened, which had introduced into her rather lime

ited repertoire of English words one she had never before heard —dockymen.

Perfectly convinced that she was only a "fool of a nigger" Carson asked if there were any rooms to rent in the house?

There were rooms to rent and Dolly took down from a nail a bunch of keys and led the way upstairs, first opening the Gaff room for inspection then the one next which was the same that Carson had lodged in during the winter. This last room Carson decided he would take. Dolly directed him to go to the owner of the house, who was a groceryman living about two squares off, and pay for the first week in advance. Carson left his cowskin covered trunk with the negress and departed on that She watched him till he had turned the corner with that same dull haze over her little black eyes, when he was quite out of sight a sudden change swept over the negress—a transfiguration as swift as if blown by the wind—the haze vanished from her eyes, they danced with viperish activity. Getting behind the window so that her natural enemy, the "Arish 'ooman" over the way could not witness her antics, Dolly gave herself up to an ecstacy, if we may so speak, of self gratulation at the success of her strategy.

"Hi! hi! hi!" she panted under her breath, her lean body doubled up in a convulsive fit of mirth, "hi! hi! hi! dat 'ar po' white trash tink dis niggah's a big fool! wot a fool he is! hi! hi! hi! widout no spec' o' spicion—he aint got dat much sense in his fool head!" snapping her claw-like finger and thumb in the air and turning up her nose in high contempt. The sudden return of Carson, evidenced by a knock on the door, in a flash brought every feature of the black face, every nerve of the lean body to order, dull stupidity took the place of activity of body and mind and when Carson received his cowskin trunk he saw nothing to change his opinion that she was intensely stupid and intensely stolid. Dolly followed him up stairs with smiling hu-

mility. The Locators Basis and Jool

"Massa," she said, dropping a curtesy as Carson deposited his cowskin trunk in a corner of the room, "Massa, please ter gin me the job o' chambermaid in yo' room, I does it better'n any o' dese po' Arish white trash whar isn't used to fust quality ways—I does."

"Go long," replied the man gruffly, "I dont want anything of

you."

Carson started down the stairway followd by Dolly, as he was going out of the front door she asked if he would be gone long? He turned on her with an angry scowl "What the h—l do you

want to know for?"

"I's de do' keepah now," said Dolly, smilingly, "I wants to go down de ally to see how Sister Johnson's a gettin' 'long, she's been monsus poly dese few days and dey do say as de good Lord hey called her to hisse'f."

"If he'd call you to himself," muttered the locksmith glower-

ing at her, dull displeasure in his dull eyes, "there'd be one fool less on earth."

"Tanky, Massa, tanky," returned Dolly, dropping a curtesy with the pleasantest of smiles as if a boon had been bestowed,

"dat's a good wud for a po' sinnah—it is dat—sho."

She shook her head with an air of piety and wiped the corner of her left eye with the corner of the checked cotton handker-chief pinned across her bosom; on the whole she presented such a perfect picture of negro innocence that nine hundred and ninety-nine men out of a thousand would have sworn she was Truth itself.

"Well what has that to do with my going out?" asked the an-

gry but deceived Carson.

"Don't you see, Massa, ef I goes out ter see Sister Johnson an' locks de doah, as de boss 'specially 'structs me ter do, when I goes out, an Massa happens ter come back 'fo I does, how he gwine get in? Dats de obstroperlous question dat bovers dis niggahs mine."

"You have no night key to the front door?" asked the man slightly mollified at this explanation of the interest she took in

his goings out and comings in.

"Nary nudder key, Massa, nary nudder."

"Very well then I'll be back at six o'clock, you be on hand to

let me in-mind."

Dolly assured him she'd be all right, she never forgot the door "nor de gemmens dat lodged in de house." Carson walked away leaving Dolly standing in the door looking at him till he disappeared from sight. Then slowly returning to her own room after locking the front door, shaking her head in deep reflection she communed with herself:

"Dis chile's gwine ter fine out what datar' man's up ter, wid his dockymens and his har trunks; he aint arter no good sho," wagging her turbaned head in deep perplexity. All of a sudden a way seemed opened to her object, her head stopped wagging, it tossed itself triumphantly back, she snapped her black fingers contemptuously in the direction the man had departed, a broad grin, showing the two rows of her white teeth, brightened and lightened the inky aspect of her face.

"Dis chile'll git him yet; dis chile'll git him yet," she mut-

tered to herself.

Taking down a key from a nail she tiptoed upstairs as stealthily as if eyes and ears were all around her, unlocked the Gaff room went in and stood for some minutes, her gaze bent on that corner where she had once crouched behind the stove and listened to the men in the next room. Her turbaned head bent on one side, she indulged in another fit of deep reflection. The Gaff room was empty, not a piece of furniture in it, the four bare walls, none too white and clean, and the grease spotted floor were all that presented themselves to Dolly's eyes, but it seemed as if her mind's eye saw more than these, she stood staring at

the corner as if it contained some phantom of the past or some solution of the problem that perplexed her brain. Either from the corner of the room or from some dark corner of her African occiput a satisfactory scheme crept up and presented itself as a means to satisfy her curiosity. Her countenance cleared and she set herself earnestly to work. Going down stairs to her own room she brought thence a pair of old quilts which she spread on the floor making a soft carpet from the door to the corner which she had eyed so intently, then she proceeded to inspect the plank partition which separated the Gaff room from the one Carson had engaged. Closely examining the boards she discovered a small knot which by working at some little time she prized out with a nail pulled from the wall, applying her eye to the hole she found that it commanded a view of the one window Carson's room contained. Humming a song as she worked Dolly again went to her room and brought up this time, first, an old tattered and worn out calico dress, next a flat iron. The flat iron she used as a hammer to drive the nail in the plank about a foot above the hole left by the extracted knot, on the nail she hung the old calico dress. In this way the hole was darkened and concealed from sight. These few and innocent preparations completed Dolly once more returned to her own room resumed her seat by the window in full view of her natural enemy across the street, lighted her pipe and, as she smoked, fell into a pious frame of mind. She had always been subject to severe fits of piety, while the fit lasted it entirely changed the expression of her countenance, the little restless eyes took on a subdued look, the quick, nervous actions of her lean body sobered down, her head moved from side to side with solemn monotony, frequent groans and ejaculations broke from her surcharged breast as if it were heavily freighted with prayerful and penitential feelings which her pious soul was laboring to expel.

"Lord 'a' mussy!" she groaned, "Lord 'a' mussy on dis sin-

ful wul. Lord 'a' massy on dis po' mis'able sinful wul!"

After a few minutes given to smoke and pious meditation her feelings again found vent in groans and words, taking her pipe from between her lips she groaned and sighed and sighed and groaned.

"Laws 'a' mussy! good Laws 'a' mussy! Look down on dese po' mis'able sinnahs!' she murmured, after which she fell into a soothing revery, looking down on the floor and slowly wagging

her head from side to side.

"De wahfah's goin' on, 'she muttered, 'de wahfah's goin' on; Satan is de inemy, an' de devil is at wuk. Bress de Lawd fur his mussies! bress de good Lawd fur his many mussies! he am de captain! he am de 'spote in de days o' triberlation—Glory hallelujah! glory hallelujah!"

After thus relieving her surcharged soul Dolly dropped off into a doze and fell into a series of nods, her head going down so low and jerking itself up so quickly, doing the same thing over and

over it really seemed wonderful that she should enjoy that way of resting when she was within five feet of a comfortable bed on which she might have stretched herself and slept without interruption. A loud knock at the door startled her, opening her eyes she stared around, the knock was repeated, she pricked her ears forward and at the third knock rose and went to the door. By this time it was dark yet she saw by the dim light that the knocker was the new lodger; he went straight up stairs. Dolly pulled off her shoes and stole up after him, went into the Gaff room and closed the door behind her. Softly pushing aside the old calico dress that hung over the knot hole she applied her eye and looked into Carson's apartment. She heard him moving about in the dark, presently he struck a match and lighted a candle, next he took a flat bottle from his pocket and set it in the window with a glass, a pipe and a pitcher of water. preparations made, the locksmith dropped down heavily on the chair which was by the window and proceeded to enjoy himself. Dolly had full view of this window, consequently witnessed every movement. First he poured a little from the bottle into the glass then a little water, drank it down, lighted his pipe, smoked a while in stolid satisfaction, then renewed the mixture in the glass, drank it down and smoked as before. This regular alternation of smoke and drink was carried on until the locksmith's head sank down on his breast in a drunken stupor, the pipe fell from his hand, the candle burned low, flickered and flamed out leaving the man, the bottle and the pipe in pitch darkness and Dolly in a state of wonderment.

"Wot a wul—wot a wul!" she muttered to herself as she slowly made her way down stairs to her own room, "wot a quar wul dis is an' wot quar ways po' white folks do have a' drinkin'

der sevs dead drunk all by der po' lone sevs, Lor! Lor!"

CHAPTER XV.

Mrs. Singleton had no easy part to play in the business she had set herself to do. Determined that her brother should marry a rich woman, she had placed before him two for his inspection, he had made his choice, but all was not as smooth sailing as she would have liked. The love-making did not proceed as rapidly as she deemed advisable. The girl showed a character a little different from what she had looked for in so young a school girl. She was more independent, less impressible, and less sentimental. She had such decided ideas of the sort of a man she would admire, and Mrs. Singleton was quite conscious that her brother did not in the least resemble that ideal man the girl had in her mind's eye. Then her brother gave her trouble, he found it a great bore to make himself agreeable to a "bread and butter school girl," he especially found it up-hill work to keep up the role his sister told him it was necessary to act, viz:

that of a philanthropic enthusiast, contemplating schemes for the betterment of the world. The observant Mrs. Singleton soon discovered that such was the bent of the girl's mind. Under these rather discouraging circumstances, Mrs. Singleton often found it necessary to romance to the girl, in fact, such was her tact and art, she succeeded in giving Roma the idea that Arthur very much resembled her ideal man. Having learned that Roma admired literary men, Mrs. Singleton would take occasion to refer to Arthur's "article in the paper," "Arthur's letter from Europe which was published in the paper".and then, having paved the way, wishing to apologize for her brother's absence, on one occasion when both the Widow Tubinger and the girls were spending the evening with her, she said that Arthur kept himself so close of late she hardly got a word with him from week's end to week's end, she would be glad when he finished his book.

"What book?" asked the widow.

"My dear, he is writing a book of travels. You know he was in Europe five years; well, he studied closely the manners and customs of the people, especially the laboring classes. Arthur takes a deep interest in the condition of the poor. But the book's a secret—he doesn't want it mentioned until it comes from the publishers."

"Oh! it must be delightful to write a book! I wish I could

do it. I'd like it of all things."

This was the gushing of the gay widow. Roma said nothing, but it made an impression on her mind not easily effaced.

Sometimes it seemed as if the affair did not progress one step, then Mrs. Singleton would grow disheartened and urged her brother to pay some attention to the widow—the girl might elude their toils. She appeared at times exceedingly indifferent; not so with the widow, who openly admired him, and, as the sister believed, would take him at the "drop of a hat." "By George," growled Arthur, whose mind was far more

set on gaming than on getting a wife, "do you expect a fellow to court two women at the same time?"

Sometimes the two Island girls proved refractory, and made excuses, and remained away from Mrs. Singleton's teas, notwithstanding that lady's affectionate notes of invitation. first time they refused to go, Miss Mopson, sweetly but sadly rejoiced, invited Miss Smidge to accompany her to her aunt's. Her aunt had not in so many words forbidden her to bring any other of her school friends, and Melissa thought she would be serving her aunt by giving her the young company she so much affected to desire. The first glance of her aunt's eyes, as her niece introduced her friend, Miss Smidge, sent poor Melissa down to the low depths of dismalness. The reception was cold and frigid, the two lines deepened between her aunt's handsome brows. Luckily Miss Smidge was of a comfortable nature and saw nothing amiss in her reception. Punching her companion with her elbow, as she stared around the room, Miss Smidge in a loud whisper said:

"Lord, Mopsy! how fine we are!"

When taking tea, she smacked her lips and giggled at the tempting edibles before her, and expressed a wish that old Finisher would furnish 'em good grub like that. Mrs. Singleton was coldly and proudly polite. Miss Smidge, however, perceived nothing amiss, and ate with a hearty appetite.

Poor Melissa, wilting under her aunt's displeasure, could not

swallow a bite.

"I hope, Melissa," said the aunt severely, "that you are not about to fall ill."

A briny tear rolled down the little round cheek and dropped into Melissa's plate, she choked, and stammered out that she

was quite well—"only a—a headache,"

"Lord, M'liss!" cried Miss Smidge, her mouth full of seed cake, "What a goosy you are not to eat! And you were so awful hungry when we left Old Finisher's. You'd better lay in while you have a chance—we don't get feed like this every day, we don't."

Miss Smidge was certainly acting up to her own advice, and

"laying in," as she elegantly expressed it.

After tea the ladies were joined by Mr. Sharpe and his aunt, Mrs. Tubinger, and Mr. Arthur Singleton, who came with the resolution of pushing matters with the Island heiress, and was somewhat disappointed at finding himself forced to do

duty to the widow.

Mr. Sharpe had begun to find his evenings at Mrs. Singleton's very much to his taste, he felt that the female mind he discovered in Miss Mopson was very much the sort he considered fit and proper for women to possess. When Miss Mopson threw the blue ribbon over her neck and warbled in the softest of tones to the tinkling of the guitar, the softest of sentimental songs, Mr. Sharpe felt that he had found the ideal woman, and lost no chance of impressing that fact upon the gentle Melissa; and the gentle Melissa's little heart received its full measure of happiness from the belief that she had found and won the most brilliant as well as the most profound mind of the age. Such is life; and yet, mistaken Shakespeares will say the course of true love never does run smooth. Who has not seen the smoothness of a hundred loves of a hundred Sharpes and Mopsons?

In order to induce the Island girls to come to her, Mrs. Singleton invited their friends, Charlmonte and Wilmer. At first she was somewhat afraid that Charlmonte might have designs on the heiress; this fear, a little observation convinced her, was groundless. She quickly perceived the devotion between Miss Ashford and Mr. Charlmonte. It never occurred to her to fear Wilmer, for two reasons; first, she knew that her brother was by far the handsomer man, the more attractive, the more gsaceful and easy in company; secondly, Wilmer always gave way to

Singleton and paid the heiress no attention whatever while in her parlors. In this, however, that astute lady did not see with her usual clearness of vision. A silent but strong antagonism developed itself between Wilmer and Singleton, both men felt it both men grew fervently to detest eacho ther. Singleton felt that he was watched, and was uncomfortable under it. He spoke of it to his sister.

"The fellow watches me like a detective," he said. "Does he

think I am a thief?"

"You need not mind him," she replied, attaching no importance to the story, "perhaps he'd like to get the heiress himself. You need have no fear, Arthur, he can't stand besides you."

"I don't see what you have him here for," growled her broth-"He's neither useful nor ornamental. Hang him!"

"Do you suppose I could have the girl here without her friends?"

with the suppose of the suppos

A great change was going on in Wilmer's nature. He was no longer the light-hearted, ever buoyant young man, he became grave, silent, and thoughtful. His friend, Charlmonte, feared that financial troubles weighed upon him, when rallied he made an effort to appear his old self, but the old gaiety did not come; he would smile and jest, but too soon he relapsed into a stern silence. Charlmonte was puzzled. Whenever Singleton and Roma were together, Wilmer would retire to a distant corner with a book and, unobserved, watch the faces of the two—unobserved by all except Singleton, who never failed to feel when he was thus watched. In vain did the young student ask himself why he should care if this girl chose to throw herself away on a smooth, false pretender; she was no relation of his, if Charlmonte was such a fool as to see it and say nothing, it was not his business to interfere.

Yet, no matter how often and how strongly he might argue with himself against the interest he took in Roma's affairs, he never succeeded in divesting himself of that interest. Could Wilmer have known how effectually Singleton's sister was aiding him in his wooing of the heiress, his alarm and anxiety would

have broken all bounds.

One evening Mr. Arthur did not come while the young people were at Mrs. Singleton's, he could not tear himself from a game of cards he was playing with a young fellow who had more money than wisdom. Mrs. Singleton was greatly disappointed, as he had promised to push his suit.

It is needless to say how much Wilmer enjoyed the absence of

the man he disliked so intensely.

"Ah! my dear," said the widow, tying on the heiress' hood, as she was about departing, "it has been the grief of my life to see a noble fellow like Arthur, so fond as he is of domestic life, doomed to a desolate old-bachelor life."

"Doomed?—why doomed?" asked the young lady in wonder

ment.

"My dear, when Arthur was young he was too fastidious, he expected too much of young ladies, he was not satisfied with beauty and grace of person, he wanted beauty of soul, of mind. Poor Arthur, he always said he preferred a beautifu to a beautiful body, and he never found what he w when young—so few young girls have any soul, any mind, my dear. Ah! your mamma should be proud of you—Good night, my dear!—Good night!"

On one occasion, after Mr. Arthur had been devoted to her all the evening, when Mrs. Singleton kissed the heiress good night, she sighed and said, it really was too hard for poor Arthur to find the woman he had been searching for all his life—to find

her now that he was too old to win her.

Too old!

Could she have taken a better method of turning the girl's attention to the youthful, handsome, and graceful appearance of of her brother? Few men of twenty were physically comparable to Arthur Singleton at thirty-six, and his sister very well knew it.

CHAPTER XVI.

CALTY AND HIS SISTER RECEIVE THEIR FRIENDS.

By express nvitation of Calyx, Charlmonte, Wilmer and the two Island girls paid a visit to his lodgings one evening after tea. Charlmonte and Wilmer had seen nothing of their fellow student for months and were now no little astonished at the pressing invitation they received. What was the object of the invitation they had not the slightest idea, but as Calyx informed them that his sister presided over his domestic affairs Charlmonte deemed it proper to permit his Cousin Roma and Miss Ashford to accompany them. The little, mild seamstress welcomed them kindly; with her was a little girl of six or seven years old, rather a remarkable child, which at once attracted the attention of the young ladies by her peculiarly confident air and self-willed behavior. Planting herself directly in front of the young ladies the child stared at them with her bold blue eyes. She was a fair haired, straight limbed, well formed little thing.

"Tell us your name, little girl," said Miss Ashford, who was

the object of the child's critical observation.

"Is you got any more goodies?" asked the child in return.
"Goodies! what sort of goodies do you want?" asked Miss Roma.

"Cake and candy and on'ges," was the ready response.

"No, I am sorry to say we did not think about the cake and candy and on'ges; perhaps we may be more thoughtful another time. You haven't told us your name yet?"

"You bringed 'em before—you thought of 'em when you come

before, is you got any more at your house?" persisted the little thing, resolutely pursuing her own idea respecting the goodies,

utterly disdaining to notice the young lady's question.

"What can she mean?" asked Miss Charlmonte; Miss Keziah did not know. Miss Keziah said she was an odd child, not like other children. The girls began to wonder whose child it was, she bore not the slightest resemblance either to the brother or sister Calyx.

"Won't you tell the ladies your name?" asked the little seam-

stress, gently, trying to conciliate the child.

"No I won't," said the child, boldly, "they got no goodies-I

won't."

Calyx, Wilmer and Charlmonte had been talking together in one corner and they now came forward; Wilmer became spokesman and explained the object of the meeting. Calyx claimed, he said, to have made a singular discovery and wished to have his friends' opinion thereof.

"First," said Calyx, "the child must be put to bed," he

looked at his sister who sadly sighed at the task before her.

"Come with aunty to bed, dear," said the mild, little seamstress, coaxingly.

The child braced herself against the wall and looked defiantly

at the seamstress.

"Come with aunty, dear, that's a pretty girl," still more en-

treatingly.

"Go away!" screamed the child, with fury, "I won't go to bed; go away! you ugly old cat—you mean old cat! I won't go to bed; I won't! I won! I won't!"

"Take her by force," said Calyx, "let her know that she must

obev."

The little, mild Keziah's whole nature was opposed to using force, was by nature inclined to yield to force, in fact, had not her brother's force been there to push her on, the force of the child would have proved the stronger. The little woman and the strong, resisting child went into their usual struggle, the one screaming at the top of her voice, kicking with her strong, little feet, fighting with her strong, little hands; the other pulling by the arms with all her might, in the softest voice endeavoring to win the turbulent, little creature to obedience. By dint of perseverance and sheer strength the grown woman succeeded in dragging the child out and putting her to bed.

"How to manage that child," said Calyx, "is, to me, a difficult problem; moral suasion has no effect, reasoning, entreaties have no effect. When she wants to do a thing that thing she is determined to do and no effort can make her voluntarily give up.

She follows her impulses as blindly as an animal."

"Did you ever try the virtues of a switch?" asked Roma.

"Not yet, though sorely tempted; the switch is an unpleasant remedy."

"All medicines are unpleasant," said Wilmer, "I am inclined

to think if Miss Calyx were to give that little one a small switching, she would think twice before throwing herself into such a passion."

When the screams and yells ceased Miss Calyx returned, panting and out of breath. Calyx requested his sister to bring Madame

Thebideoux in.

The Madame was introduced to Calyx's guests. She was a largesized woman with blonde hair and blue eyes, neatly and modestly dressed. Calyx gave her a chair, seated himself before her and went through certain mesmeric motions, which, in a few minutes, seemed to put the woman into a profound sleep.

"Did you ever see this lady before?" asked Calyx, looking at

his "subject" with an air of satisfaction.

They said they never had.

"Charlmonte you and Wilmer have seen and talked with this lady."

They had no memory of having done so.

"When you saw her she was suffering from a disease which disfigured her as much as small-pox would; she is now in a healthy condition."

"When and where have we seen her?" asked Wilmer.

"Do you remember the woman who wanted poison on the night before Christmas?"

"You do not mean that this is that woman?"

"This is that woman," returned the student, profoundly enjoying the success of his experiment.

'What has wrought this wonderful cure? This woman has no appearance of vice, no trace of the drunkenness that was then so

distressingly visible."

"The disease is driven from her system. You need not be so surprised, drunkenness is as much a disease as the smallpox; were you to see a patient red and swollen with the smallpox and afterwards see him when in health, especially if no marks were left, you would not know him to be the same man; drink bloats and reddens and disfigures. She is restored to health, that is all. It is now the hope of my heart one day to establish a home, an infirmary, where I can treat drink-diseased patients and restore them to their natural health."

"But," said Roma, interested in the idea, "will not your patients return to drink as soon as you let them out of your infirm-

ary?"

"Of course it is possible, just as it is possible for any one to become a drunkard, but my method of treatment entirely eradicates the desire for drink, the taste for stimulus. Consider the fact that no man is born a drunkard, no child cares for alcohol or wine, until it is taught the liking for it. Little by little the liking grows, the taste is fed by tasting until it becomes a craving that cannot be resisted. In proportion as the craving strengthens, the power of the will grows weaker. The common error of physicians and people in general, is that they persist in looking upon

the habit of drinking as a moral disease, which the afflicted themselves might govern. When we come to see that it is a disease of the body and can no more be controlled or governed by the will than other diseases of the body, we will see the necessity of using force in the treatment of drunkards just as we use force in the management of the insane or the smallpox patient."

"And you have tested your theory on this-lady?" asked

Charlmonte.

"You see the result," said Calyx, looking with pride on the fair, healthful face of the sleeping woman, "you saw her condition the night I took her in hand, you see her now."

"And you think there will be no return of the disease?"

"She is as free from it now as she was the first time she ever tasted the poisonous stuff, of course the same conditions might

bring back the same disease."

Roma said she hoped he would explain his system, should she ever become a millionaire she would help him build his infirmary; she thought the man who discovered the cause and cure of drunkenness deserved to be immortalized on canvass, and in stone, he would rank higher than any military hero and ought to

receive higher honors.

"But will receive none," said Calyx, "the theory is too simple, too natural to win plaudits from the people; there is no mystery or clap-trap about it, hence it will make its way very slowly in the world. In searching for the cause of drunkenness I started from the fact that the love of alcohol is not a natural taste and is an acquired one. The causes that lead to its acquirement I looked for. Were a sheep farmer to find that the great majority of his animals were afflicted with a perverse desire to eat weeds that led them to disease and death would he not look for the cause of that perversity of the natural instinct, which should lead to self-preservation, not to self-destruction? He would not berate his sheep as wicked and bad, and despise and punish them, he would consider their surroundings, their food, their drink, the quality of the grass and corn they ate, the air they breathed. Men are no wiser than sheep, indeed not so wise, in the matter of hygiene."

"True—very true. You think, then, that, back of the bad habit of drink, lie the bad habits that caused the drink?" asked Roma.

"I do; if you reason you cannot escape the conclusion; bad diet, unnatural food is at the bottom of the craving for stimulus."

"Unnatural food?"

"Yes, salt, pepper, spices, tea, coffee and animal food."

There was a dead silence, the proposition was so new to his auditors and, if the truth must be told, seemed so inadequate to the

ease, they knew not what to say.

"I told you," said Calyx, reading aright their silence, "that my theory was too simple, too natural to gain credence. However I am not so irrational as to expect any immediate sign of success, all truths travel slowly; it will indeed be some time be-

fore even advanced minds can see the slow poisoning humanity is enduring from bad food, from doctored food."

"Doctored?"

"I mean seasoned food, all seasoning is that much injury, but we will not dwell on that subject any longer. I wish to exhibit to you, especially to Wilmer, some phenomena that I do not understand. You all probably know a little of the mystery of mes-This woman as you see is in a mesmeric sleep, you can test her, she is utterly insensible to sight, sound or touch from the outside world, except through the operator, myself. She has exhibited—but I will let you see for yourselves."

Turning to the sleeping woman Calyx took one hand in his and, for a moment, looked at her intently.

"Drusilla are you attending?" he asked.

"Y-e-s," was the labored reply, as if coming from a long distance, from another world as Keziah thought; Keziah did not at all approve of such experiments.

"Is any one with me now?" was the next question. "Y-e-s," as before, labored and from a long distance.

"Who is it?" "The-same." "Who is it?"

There was no response.

"Look closely, can you see who it is?"
"A—woman."

"What is her name?"

No response.

"When did she leave this life?" "Sixteen—hun-dred—sixty—five."

This was delivered very slowly and seemingly with great effort, long pauses between words and syllables.

"What disease ended her life?"

"Ig-no-rance."

"Ignorance? yes that ends many lives," said Calyx, reflectively, then he went on:

"What form did the ignorance assume?"

"Ac-cu-sers—ju-ry—judge—hang-man."
The little seamstress turned pale, the story that an ancestress of theirs had been hung for witchcraft rose to her memory. "Will you be so good as to get the person's name?" asked

"Han-nah-Keziah-Spin-ner," came as from an immense distance.

"That's the witch's name!" said Keziah, pale and frightened. Roma laid her hand on the little seamstress' with an encouraging glance.

"Does Mrs. Spinner want anything?"

"Y-e-s."

"May we know what it is?"

"Com-mu-ni-cate—witn—her—de-scen-dent—"

"How can she communicate? by what means?"

"Pen-pa-per."

ed to war

"Pen and paper were brought and laid on the table before the sleeping woman but she sat stone still. After a moment's consideration Calyx placed the pen in the woman's hand and the paper under it, almost immedialely the hand began to move with a strange, spasmodic motion over the paper yet not touching it; after a time it settled down and wrote in large, crabbed characters as follows:

> There be a Spirit Force that moveth on Without surcease, and ever on—and up,
> And ever toward the great White TRUTH—the Truth
> Which is the moral Sun of man, which lights
> Ye path Humanity must tread. And there
> Be spirits of a lower kind that do
> Terrevor strive to har we way to Truth— Forever strive to bar ye way to Truth—
> To cast dark shadows twixt Truth's rays and souls
> That yet inhabit tenements of clay.
> Fear not, for truth immortal is, and strong,
> And steadfast, and unswerving as the poles
> Whereon doth swing the Universe itself.
> For Truth both but one aspect and one heart For Truth hath but one aspect and one heart, Grand, white, true, beautiful and absolute.
> While Wrong, for every day in every year Throughout the rolling centuries, Wrong hath A changing face; in color, shape, designs, Desires, expressions and professions, all, Is Wrong unstable and enshifting as The sands along a sea-beat shore. Each ort And atom of Wrong's body is composed Of Falsity, therefore is Wrong a thing Of Time, wrought on, changed and decayed by Time. Each day do parts and portions of Wrong's body
> Rot and fall away—Truth is immortal
> No atom of the Truth can ever die,
> Wrong daily dies.
> And thou, O! witch-descended youth, arise!
> Circl up thy loins to bettle for the Truth Gird up thy loins to battle for the Truth. Each man must do his portion to slay Wrong, And thou hast many portions for thy part. HANNAH KEZIAH SPINNER.

Calyx looked at Wilmer questioningly, curious to know what,

if any, impression this made on that materialistic young man.
"Will it shake his materialism? Will it have a feather's weight in proving the existence of spirit life?" were the questions Calyx wanted Wilmer to answer, but which he did not an-

Charlmonte believed in the genuineness of the exhibition, believed the communication to be what it pretended, and to come, as it claimed, from Calyx's ancestress, but he looked upon the whole proceeding as wrong and dangerous. The two girls were simply astonished.

"Can you account for it, Wilmer," asked Calyx, "on any other othesis than that o spirit life? It is impossible that this wo-

man could have known anything of our witch ancestress. Does it shake your materialism?"

"Not in the least. If it shakes yours, I am astonished."

"But how can you account, how explain?"

"I do not try to explain. I see around me a thousand phenomena I cannot explain. We cannot understand the mysteries of Nature, we can only observe a few of its laws. The growth of a tree from an acorn is a phenomenon at which we have ceased to wonder, because we have so often seen it. So of a thousand other things as wonderful as this."

"But if you see so many wonderful things," said Roma, "how can you reject the belief in the immortality of the soul because it

is wonderful?"

"I do not reject it because it is wonderful, but because it does not appear to me to harmonize with one law of Nature that seems universal, viz: the law of change."

"We see that nothing stands still, there is a force in Nature which silently makes changes in every part and atom of the Universe with which we are acquainted. A tree grows up from an acorn; a daily, hourly, minutely change is going on. Growth is change; when its growth is completed, does it stand still? No; it instantly begins to decay. Slowly, but surely, the forces are at work, changing the great, strong, green tree into something else. So it is with all animal bodies, with stocks and stones, earth, air, and water. Now, in the face of this general law, it would require very strong evidence to convince me that man's spirit will live eternally."

"You say growth is change—perhaps our spirits will forever

grow."

"But the general law goes to show that nothing can forever grow, everything reaches its height, ceases to grow, and begins

to decompose."

"Has your ancestress," asked Roma, "ever pointed out to you any particular part of Wrong which you are destined to war against?"

"Drink."

"Drink?—that suits your natural bent?"

"She tells me she has influenced me in that direction, has been impressing me from childhood. She advises me to go on a lecture tour throughout the country."

"And you accept the advice?",

"I intend to go."

"What subject will you treat of?"

"Drunkenness, its cause and cure. Mesmerism and its utility. Keziah and my subject will accompany me. I hope to earn money enough to complete my medical studies."

"And the child?"

"Will be confided to the care of a woman who feels herself able to manage it."

CHAPTER XVII.

LOVE AND JEALOUSY.

Mrs. Singleton was indefatigable in her love-making for her brother. The wooing was done by books and flowers and pretty The girl was not suffered to forget, Singleton was kept constantly in her thoughts one way or another. The young gentleman had not the privilege of calling at the Institute, but he knew which church the Island girls attended; spurred up by his sister, he was often on hand to cast on her glances of homage, to walk by her side to the Institute door. Charlmonte always walked by Miss Ashford's side. Wilmer also attended church, he, who considered sermons the most intolerable bore; he also watched, but furtively, and more than once had the courage to push himself ahead of his rival and walk home with the heiress, which, however, did not prevent Singleton from walking on the other side. The two men had come to hate each other with a deep, if unspoken hatred. There were times when Wilmer almost gnashed his teeth with rage, and when Singleton would turn on his heel with irritable dislike.

"Why does the great boor annoy me with his presence?" the

handsome Arthur would ask of his sister.

"That such a girl should fall a prey to a fortune hunter," said

Wilmer, "is a sin and a shame."

He began to feel resentful and irritable toward Charlmonte because he was so blinded by his own absorbing passion he could not see the danger his cousin was in. Whenever he saw Singleton with Roma he sank into silent gloom. Over and over he would resolve never to go about them again, never to visit Mrs. Singleton's when he knew the girl and her wooer would be there, but he could not remain away, or, if he forced himself to stay, imagination tortured him with pictures of what might be going on. In vain did he take himself to task for feeling a mean jealousy; in vain did he assure himself that the girl was nothing to him, and never could be anything. Of what force is reason against the most irresistable feeling of the human heart? He might tell himself every hour in the day that she was nothing to him, and never could be; there was a something within him that knew she was all the world, all the universe to him; she dwelt in his thoughts by day and in his dreams by night. The very effort that he made to hide and subdue the passion that possessed him made it the deeper and more powerful. The worst of it was that his judgment, his reason, if left to themselves helped on the passion; his judgment told him that she was the one woman whom he would have chosen from the universe, the one woman he would have created for himself, had the power been his to create. There were times when he tried to persuade himself that the dislike he felt toward Singleton was the result of a mean jealousy, and not because of any unworthy quality in the man himself.

"He is handsome, elegant, easy in manners, a natural lady's man," he would say, "and I, because I lack all that, because I am a great hulk of a fellow, and please no woman's eye, hate him."

But all this had no effect. The feeling that Singleton was un-

worthy of the girl was ineradicable.

Charlmonte was not blind to the change that came over his friend. Once, as they were returning home, after having taken the girls to the Institute, a deeper and darker distraction than usual fell upon Wilmer. He had observed, or thought that he observed, a more significant devotion on the part of Singleton, and a more tell-tale pleasure in its reception on the part of the girl. Charlmonte spoke several times and got no answer; he wanted an explanation.

"What has come over you, Wilmer?" he said, after they were in their own room and the light of the lamp showed the set, stern face of his friend. "I am bound to know, old fellow," he continued, seeing that Wilmer threw himself in a chair and made no reply. "If you've got yourself in any scrape, let a fellow know, so he can help you out. Make a clean breast of it-

what has happened?"

"Nothing—nothing in the world; what do you mean?" Seizing his violin he sent forth the dismalest wails.

"Something has happened—at least, something has woefully changed you. You are not the same fellow you were a few months ago. What has done this? What troubles you?"

"Nothing. On the contrary, I am extremely pleased at the prospect of employment as soon as I leave the city, and I'm ex-

tremely grateful to your father for giving me the place."

Charlmonte's father had written to his son that the Island physician intended to give up practice. Charlmonte immediate-

ly applied for the place and received it for his friend.
"You see, old fellow," said Wilmer cheerfully, "it's a great thing for a fellow to get to work at once. My father's the best man on earth, but he's had to strain his purse to educate me. He has a large family, I'm the oldest boy, and nothing would better suit me than to relieve my father of my expense as soon as possible."

"I hope you will like the Island," said Charlmonte.

"Of course I shall like it."

After that the fiddle gave out lively sounds for a while, and Wilmer was his old self again but, Charlmonte observed that it was an effort, and that he soon flagged and fell into a dark train of thought, the fiddle lay silent in his lap, his eyes bent on the

Charlmonte got up and shook him by the shoulders.

"I must—I will know what it is! What have you done?

Murder? Out with it' I'll help you hide or run away—make a clean breast of it! What dire misdeed have you done, or do you intend doing?"

A forced smile was all the protest. Wilmer felt that his face

had betrayed him.

"I have it," continued Charlmonte, treating the subject as a jest. "The melancholy Mopson has proposed to you, and you have not the courage to say 'no'—She hasn't? Well, then the widow Tubinger has flung her heavy purse and her heavier person at you, and you are in for it, and now want to blow your brains out—eh?"

"Not quite so bad as that," said Wilmer. "I must have looked as tortured as the old saint stretched on a gridiron—no,

flayed alive, I think he was."

"I never heard he was a saint."
"I was thinking of Singleton."

"Singleton? Why do you think so much of him? That's precisely the answer you made me last week. What's the matter with Singleton?"

"I do not like his face," replied Wilmer, not knowing exactly

what else to say.

"That's precisely what you said of him before; if you don't like him, why think of him so much? I think he's a good-looking fellow—very gentlemanly in his manners."

"A man may be a scoundrel and have pleasing manners."

"Certainly; but is there any reason for thinking Singleton a scoundrel?"

"I have been studying Spurzheim lately; he doesn't think so well of those narrow heads, with eyes set close together.

Breadth of forehead indicates a nobler nature."

"Oh!" cried Charlmonte, who had not the slightest faith in the new science of phrenology, "when you come to damn a man scientifically, I have nothing to say. I leave the whole field to you. I think it very lucky that you are not the autocrat of the country; if you were, you would be ordering fellows' heads cut off because they didn't suit your theories. You'd catch men and kill them to keep them from killing somebody else."

"You may laugh, Charlmonte, but I do not think it a laughing matter to see such a fellow as Singleton trying to win such a girl as Roma; if she were my cousin, I would put her on her guard."

"Put Roma on her guard!" repeated Charlmonte, all at once thoroughly alive to the subject. What on earth do you mean Wilmer?"

"Exactly what I say. If Roma were my cousin, I would not

be willing to see her marry such a man as Singleton."

"Willing! Why, no one would be willing. But why think of such a thing? Surely there can be no reason for alarm."

"If you had not been so deep in the mire yourself, old fellow," said Wilmer, "you might have seen that others are in danger of falling in."

"What have you seen?" asked Charlmonte, a sharp anxiety

in his tone and eyes.

"What have I seen? What any one not blind as a bat could

have seen months ago, that a very handsome, experienced, and worldly man, is laying himself out to fascinate an inexperienced and wealthy girl. If he's not the sort of a man for your cousin's husband, think of the danger."

Charlmonte was aroused. He glanced back over the past months, and it seemed to him that he had lived in a dream—adelightful dream, but if he had suffered his cousin to drift into

danger, he had not done his duty.

"Under no circumstances would Singleton suit as Roma's husband. Her proud father would never consent—he has a prejudice in favor of the people of his own State. No Northern man would suit her relatives-"

"Suit her relatives!" repeated Wilmer in an irritated tone. "The worst of it is, this particular man will not suit Roma her-

self."

"Oh! then, why alarm ourselves about the matter, if he does

not please her?"

"Do you not understand, Charlmonte, that a girl may be pleased and not suited? She is young, what will please her now will not suit her at twenty-five. She has a superior mind, and will make a superior woman. If she marries an unworthy man her life will be ruined."

Charlmonte avowed his intention of speaking to Roma, and also of discontinuing the visits to Mrs. Singleton, at least, they

should be less frequent.

Wilmer went to bed with a hope in his heart, still he told himself, she was no more to him than any other girl—that she never could be any more, the great fortune she would inherit made a wall, or a gulf between them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE ISLAND GIRLS ARE CALLED HOME. -MRS. SINGLETON IS DISAP-POINTED, AND MISS MOPSON FEELS THAT SHE IS PERSECUTED.

Charlmonte did not speak to Roma about the Singleton affair, the need for so doing seemed to have passed, for the young girls were called home by a letter brought by Carson, who had been in the city three days, but failed to present himself until after he had indulged in that little quiet, private "drunk," to which he thought he was fairly entitled after so long an abstinence. The letter was from Roma's mother, as follows:

My Dear Boy:—Roma must come home as quickly as possible, her grandfather is very ill and pines to see her. It goes to my heart to see his anxious eyes and his anxious face that he may not live to see Roma. Can you come with the girls? Constance also must return, her mother is not willing for her to remain if Roma comes. We send this letter by Carson, who has been on the Island for some months, doing jobs, repairing gins, etc. Should it happen, dear boy, that you cannot bring the girls home, put them under the Captain's care, on a good vessel; Carson will look after the baggage, but we all hope you may be able to come, as we will feel better satisfied to have you with the girls. Father is awake and wants me.

Your affectionate aunt,

CAROLINE CHARLMONTE.

CAROLINE CHARLMONTE.

Charlmonte gave the letter to Wilmer to read.

"You will go yourself?" asked Wilmer.
"Certainly. I will not trust them on a vessel by themselves. We will take the first good boat. Do you go back with us, Mr. Carson?"

Carson said he had some relatives he would like to visit, but

if he was wanted he would go at once.

"No, no-there is no need for you to hurry yourself, "said the young man, casting a critical look on Carson, and not particularly desiring his company home, "by all means, Mr. Carson, take

time, and visit your friends.

Thus it happened, that when Mrs. Singleton dispatched her carriage on Friday evening, to bring the young ladies to take tea, she was doomed to disappointment. She had urged her brother to bring his wooing to a crisis, and to seize the present opportunity for that purpose. Singleton had agreed to decide the business and secure the heiress as soon as possible.

"Give our best regards to your kind aunt," Roma said to Miss Mopson, as that young lady desired to know if they were going with her, "and tell her we regret that we will not have time to bid her good bye, and thank her for her kind attentions to us.

As soon as Grandpapa is better we will write to her."

Miss Mopson put out her little limp fingers to be shaken, and said she hoped the young ladies would have a pleasant trip, and she hoped they would find their Grandpapa much better, after which she glided softly away, and down the stairs, out to the carriage, on which sat the imposing Puffington, waiting to carry her to her stately aunt's. Miss Mopson had not forgotten a former occasion when the Island girls had not accompanied her, and she had taken Miss Smidge, she had not forgotten the angry disappointment of her aunt, and how she, Miss M., had been sharply reproved, and now, away down in the little heart of Miss Mopson there stirred a solemn and secret satisfaction at the prospect of another disappointment, and another fit of anger which would vent itself on the head of Miss Mopson. Miss Mopson took a sweet and solemn satisfaction in the idea that after her aunt had vented her anger upon her, she would feel some contrition on learning the fact that she was not to blame for the absence of the Southern girls. Full of these amiable imaginings, Miss Mopson glided up stairs to her aunt's room, and kissed her with a solemn air, affecting not to see the questioning look in her aunt's eyes.

"Are you alone, Melissa?" she asked, with rising asperity. "Yes, Aunt, all alone," replied the young lady, with sad sweetness, arranging the cushions of the sofa on which she had

dropped her little person.

The aunt looked darkly at her.

"Why are you alone?",

"They wouldn't come," replied Miss Melissa, with innocent indifference, giving the cushion a punch to bulge it up.

"Why would they not come?" persisted the aunt with sharp-

er asperity.

"Said they were too busy," carelessly replied Miss Melissa, although she was perfectly conscious of the frigid look of severity fixed upon her.

"Too busy?—What do you mean?" was the angry rejoinder. "They're not coming any more," replied Miss Melissa, inno-

cently nestling her little head among the sofa cushions.

Mrs. Singleton grew white, a cold horror seemed to creep over her. Should the scheme she had so long and carefully toiled for fall in pieces like a card-house?

"Not-coming-any-more!" she repeated hoarsely, a dead-

ly palor overspreading her face.

The girl affected not to see, drew her feet up to a more comfortable position, and nestled her head among the cushions in a way peculiarly exasperating to the aunt, who felt such keen anxiety she could no longer control her temper.

"You perverse, ill-conditioned girl!" she cried in a hoarse voice. "What mischief have you been at? What did you say—

what do, to keep them from coming?"

The amiable Miss Melissa had gained her point, she had worked her aunt up to a rage, and now felt that she had good cause to consider herself abused for nothing. It was not her fault that the odious girls did not come. She immediately burst into tears.

"Don't make a fool of yourself, Melissa," said her aunt severely. "Can you explain what you did without blubbering?"

"Blubbering!" What a word to be applied to the young lady destined to experience a grand, romantic passion! Miss Mopson felt injured in her tenderest sensibilities. She wept copiously. She hid her little, round face in her little lace handkerchief, and sniffled and snuffled as though her little heart would break.

"Can't you stop long enough to tell me what you did to offend those girls? You must have done something; when they left

last Friday they were perfectly amiable."

"It—it—it ain't my fault!" sobbed the young lady from behind her lace handkerchief. She was in full and perfect enjoyment of the persecution she had anticipated.

"Whose fault is it, then?"

"As—as—as if I—I could keep them from going—going home!"

"What do you mean?—home?"

"As—as—as if I could keep her old—old grandfather from having a—a—a—fit and—and—and sending for—for them to go—

go home!"

Mrs. Singleton felt for a moment as if she were turning to stone. She sat and gazed at the girl a statue of horror. All her labor thrown away! Her brother a pauper, and no prospect of doing anything. She went to Melissa and gave her a fierce shaking, which finally made her relate what had occurred.

The girls were busy packing up their things, she managed to say, and were to leave on the "City of Norfolk" next day, at ten o'clock, a. m.

"When did they get the news?" asked the aunt, subdued by

the certainty of losing the game she had so long played for.

"Thurs — Thursday morning," sobbed the persecuted Miss

Mopson.

"And you never let me know! You should have come at once and told me. All's lost! all's lost!" she cried, pacing the floor with a white, troubled face.

"How-how-should I-I know you-you wanted to know?"

sobbed the girl.

This was so just a reproof that the aunt could not but be sensible of her error. She had never taken her niece into her confidence, and that not very astute young lady had never a suspicion of her aunt's plans with regard to the heiress and her orother.

"I can't see—what—what you see in those stuck-up Island girls to—to like—so—so much better than—than your own kin!" blurted out the niece with a fresh burst of tears, all the pent-up little jealousies of her little heart finding vent in tears, sobs, and words.

"You talk like a simpleton, Melissa," said her aunt in a kinder tone. "You do not understand. Go up stairs and bathe your eyes—you do not wish to look like a fright, do you? Mrs. Tubinger and her nephew will be here presently—make yourself

presentable."

The nephew of Mrs. Tubinger was Miss Mopson's Lord Mortimer, all her little soul fell down and worshipped that talented young man, and the talented young man found great pleasure in being worshipped, especially by a young lady with a few thousand dollars in the bank, that would be of great assistance to the aspiring young man, and would help him put his foot on another rung of the ladder leading up to fame and fortune.

Many delicate little tokens of attachment had the young lawyer given to the little, fluttering heart of Miss Mopson, so that now there was a satisfactory understanding between them that, as soon as she graduated from the Finisher Institute, he was to

propose in form for the hand of the lovely Melissa.

The observant aunt was well pleased at the arrangement, it had been an object with her to get the girl off her hands as soon as possible.

"Sharpe will make a living for her," she said, "and that is all Melissa has any right to expect. She never inherited any of the

Singleton beauty or style."

As soon as niece was gone up stairs to cover the traces of tears with her pearl powder, Mrs. Singleton dispatched a servant in all haste for her brother. That gentleman came, smiling and good-humored, for it happened that he had a prospect of negotiating a loan from old McFlint, of a few thousand dollars, and he felt quite confident that, once in possession of the cash, he could

retrieve his losses, and set himself up again. Such is the peren-

nial hope of the gambler's heart.

"The bird is flown, or about to fly," she said, anxiety and reproof in her aspect. "You have made such poor use of your opportunities—I fear your chance is gone."
"What's up?" asked Arthur in a careless way.

His sister explained the situation.

"Had you pursued this girl with earnestness, Arthur," she said in conclusion, "you would soon be one of the richest men in

the country. Her grandfather is at the point of death."

Mr. Arthur said he had done his best to make himself agreeable, but she was such a slow girl, he couldn't get on with her as he could with other women. She was so confoundedly prudish, a fellow was always afraid he'd everlastingly offend. was always mounted on a high horse, so awfully moral and goody-good.

"Why not take Mrs. Tubinger?"

"Hang the Tubinger! She'd be the death of me in a week, with her loud voice and large hands, and her nephew is a conceited bore. If I get that lift from old McFlint—hang the wo-What's the use of a felmen! I don't want a wife anyway.

low's putting a yoke on his neck?"

As usual, the sister set herself to work to move him in the way he should go, and ended by sending him off at once to the Finisher Institute to seek an interview, during which he was to plead his cause, and procure an engagement. Once engaged, his sister thought that his course would be easy, engagements give many privileges which would enable a man to obtain complete control over a girl. So, half an hour later, the handsome Arthur presented himself at the Institute door and handed Kitty a note for Miss Charlmonte. The note had been indited by his sister; she posted him on all points. Not that Mr. Arthur was unfamiliar with all the arts of wooing women, but his sister had so persistently drilled into his mind that this one woman was not to be won by his usual manner, that he yielded to her judgment and made an effort to follow her directions, which were to maintain great dignity, take a deep interest in moral and social questions, and make love by few words and many ardent looks, and never to attempt liberties. "She won't like freedoms," his sister said, "she wants immense respect above all things, a passionate love next."

"I have just learned from my niece that you will leave the city to-morrow. May I not see you before you go? I must—do not refuse! I await your answer. await your answer. ARTHUR SINGLETON.

The two girls read the little missive, the heart of the one beat

with a quicker action, the heart of the other sunk.

"He does not wish to see me," said Miss Constance, almost "What right has that man to see you alone? - O! tearfully. Roma!"

"What shall I tell him, Miss?" inquired the waiting Kitty.

"Tell him I will be down in a few minutes."

Then she went to the mirror and began to brush her hair, after which she put a knot of scarlet ribbon at her throat, and turned and looked at her cousin's sorrowful face.

"What is it, Conny dear?" she asked, looking tenderly on the

wistful eyes.

"As if you don't always look well enough to see that old man!" said Miss Conny, as spitefully as she could, referring to the little adornment Miss Charlmonte thought it necessary to make before seeing her lover.

"Why, Conny dear," replied Roma, "you look as if there were a beast—a real, four-footed beast, down in the parlor, and I

were going down to be devoured."

"Kiss me before you go," pleaded Miss Constance, tearfully pressing up to her cousin's breast.

The kiss was given, but the beauty was reluctant to release

her cousin, she clung to her.

"Roma dear," she said in a whisper, "don't!—don't!" "Don't what? You little, lovely goose! What do you suppose I am going to do so dreadful?"

"It won't do, Roma dear—I feel it won't do—I know it won't

do!"

The tone was so entreating, so tender, so earnest, the face so anxious, Miss Roma could no longer treat the matter as a jest. She seemed to reflect a moment, and then came to a resolution.

"I promise you one thing, Conny dear," she said brightly, "you may rely on this, no matter what he has come to say, I will return to you as free, as untrammeled, as I go away. Will that

satisfy you, little Cousin?"

It was owing to this promise that Singleton was defeated in his ardent and persistent pleading for an engagement. The uttermost he could gain was the privilege of corresponding with her. She would not confess or deny a preference for him. To all his entreaties she replied that she could not, while her grandfather was so sick, think of anything else. And so they parted.

Singleton's sister considered the promise of a correspondence

almost as good as an engagement.

"You can more effectually make love to a woman on paper than by words," she said. "You give the woman a chance to idealize you. Women like Roma never fall in love with the real man; they take the real man and throw over him the glamor of their own imagination, and fall in love with the creature of their own creating, and call it by the man's name."

CHAPTER XIX.

ASHFORD ISLE

Lay off the coast of South Carolina. It was owned chiefly by four planters. Roma's grandfather, Henry Ashford, now an old

man past seventy, his brother, Richard Ashford, a much younger man, the father of Constance, Edward Charlmonte, the father of the young student of the same name, and an old gentleman by the name of James Widgerly, were the principal owners of the Island. At one time Henry Ashford was master of the entire Island; he had divided it into four portions and sold to the present owners. Art and Nature had made Ashford Isle a paradise on earth; the soil was rich, the climate soft and salubrious, the fervid heat of the tropical sun was tempered by the cool breezes from the sea, the vegetation was rich and luxuriant, not only was the cotton grown the finest in the world but the tropical fruits were of the best, orange groves and vineyards were unrivaled, the trees and flowers were unequaled for beauty and splendor, water oaks and magnolias, myrtle and pomegranites beautified the scene, birds of brilliant plumage were numerous. What is more lovely than a flock of humming birds, those bright little things gendered in the glowing hearts of the flowers by the burning beams of the sun? At the extreme northern end of the Isle was a small village called Ashville originally settled by a few fisher-The village had grown to be quite a trading place, its inhabitants were mostly market gardeners, fishermen and their families. There was a school house, two churches, a dry-goods shop, a grocery and an

EMPORIUM OF FASHION.

This last was a place of great and growing importance in the estimation of the African inhabitants of the Island. The Africans outnumbered the Caucasians; the blacks numbered nearly a thousand, the whites only a few hundred. The presiding genius of the Emporium of Fashion was a maiden lady of sallow complexion and thin body, Miss Dorcas Hightower by name,

contracted by the negroes to Miss Dawkshiter.

In the opinion of the negro population Miss Dawkshiter was the very genius of good taste. The wonderful combinations of colors gotten up by Miss Dawkshiter to please and fascinate African matrons and maids, the wonderful mixing of red and yellow and green and purple, the gorgeous bows of ribbon that glowed on the tops and bottoms and sides of Sunday bonnets, the brilliant boquets of artificial flowers that brightly bloomed from the tufts of woolly hair and the sides of high turbans, were a sight to see on a Sunday morning, as the dusky worshipers wended their way to church or babtising, as the case might be. Babtising by the seaside was the favorite free show of the Island, to which the negroes crowded in droves, all and each lifting up their voices and singing at the highest pitch. The little village was as picturesque as possible; the houses were not fine or freshly painted but vines and flowers were so abundant they could not fail to beautify; the streets were wide, straight and shaded by three rows of live oak trees, a row on either side and a row in the middle. It was on this Island that the two girls, Roma and Constance, had grown up, almost as free and untrammeled as the

birds. They had been accustomed to riding unattended from one end of the Island to the other, consequently were fearless horse-women, they could handle an oar and swim with the best. Between Roma and her grandfather existed the most devoted affection, they suited each other as seldom the old and the young suit, she looked upon him as a grand old man, he looked upon her as the brightest of her sex. His own daughter he loved, but not with that utter devotion he gave his grandchild. His daughter had fewer strong points and the old man admired strength of character.

He lay sick in his room, in the full belief that his time was come to bid farewell to earthly scenes. The only thought that troubled his mind was the fear that he should not see his granddaughter before he left.

"Has the "City of Norfolk" come yet?" inquired the old man,

his anxious eyes peering out from his haggard face.

"Not yet, father, not yet, we look for it every hour now," returned his daughter, soothingly. She smoothed his pillow, gave him his drops and sat in silence by his side. He dozed or seemed to doze for some moments, suddenly he raised his head, his old eyes peering out with something of their old fire, a faint noise, a rustle was heard coming from the hall.

"What is it, Caroline?" he asked, "see if it is Roma; go and

see; they will not let her in-bring her to me; go at once."

His daughter softly stole into the hall and was clasped in her daughter's arms.

"Oh! Mama! Mama! may I see him now? may I see him

right now?"

"Roma! Roma! Roma!" called out the old, beloved voice,

with all its old, imperative power.

The girl flew to the sound, she threw her slender arms about the neck of the stricken giant, she kissed the gray locks that lay spread on the pillow, she kissed his sunken eyes, his forehead, his wasted hands, then she broke into a rain of tears at the woful change that had taken place. She had left him so strong, so stalwart, so full of life and plans and purposes, now how fallen, how cut down!

"My darling-my darling-my darling," he murmured, his

trembling fingers tenderly wandering over her young head.

The next day it transpired why he had been so feverishly anxious to see his granddaughter once more before he departed to his long home, it was not only because of his devoted fondness, but he wished to talk over his affairs and give the girl advice and instructions. He wished to explain to her why he had left to her the legal title to all his possessions instead of to the girl's mother, his natural heir. He confided to Roma the disgraceful family secret, the skeleton in the Ashcourt closet, the second marriage of her mother to a worthless black-leg, who, if his wife inherited property, would be sure to harass her to death and spend all she possessed. "The laws of the country," said the

old man, "give a husband everything that is the wife's." To evade the law he bequeathed everything to Roma with instructions to consider half as really her mother's and, should her mother be freed by death from her husband, Roma was to invest her mother with the legal right to half of the Ashford estate. Somewhat relieved by this interview with his grandchild the old man seemed to rally, his friends begun to hope he would once more be up and about. His brother Richard was entrusted with the key to the desk containing his will, which he was to read at the proper time.

CHAPTER XX.

THE SINGLETONS.

Miss Melissa quite often had red eyes, so red that pearl powder failed to conceal the fact. Mrs. Tubinger and her nephew did not fail to comment thereon.

"Poor thing!" said the former, "I really believe, Blacky, that aunt of hers must bully her dreadfully; what else can she cry so

much about?"

The two were going home, after an evening spent with Mrs.

Singleton.

Mr. Sharpe gave a little, affected cough and expressed the hope that there was nothing serious to complain of, he rather thought, he had understood that sort of thing was rather peculiar to the—the female mind; that is a—a sort of melancholy often melting into tears.

"Tears and female fiddle-sticks!" said the cheerful widow, with frank scorn as she broke from her side of the street to the other, "Don't make a big, grey goose of yourself, Blacky why in the name of common sense, should the female mind be any more given to blubbering and snuffling than the male mind? Haven't I a female mind? do I go about sniffling and snuffling over the house? do I turn up my eyes and look like a dying calf when I

sing?"

The young man admitted promptly that his respected aunt did none of these things, also in his secret heart he did not admit that his lady love rolled up her eyes like a dying calf, on the contrary he admired the way Miss Melissa turned her eyes heavenward, he thought that sort of thing very proper and pretty for female eyes. But of this he said nothing, his aunt was rich and there was no immediate prospect of husband or children to heir her estate, so her nephews and nieces were very attentive and respectful.

"Then don't talk nonsense, Blacky," returned his aunt, "and you may depend that poor girl's bullied to an inch of her life. Oh! she's a high one, Blacky, for all she's so sweet and gracious in company, she's a high one I know."

in company, she's a high one I know."

"Who's a high one?" asked her nephew, with a sudden mis-

giving that his Melissa was the one referred to as being high. Mr. Sharpe was on principle opposed to "high" females, if by high was meant willfulness, determination, etc.

"Why the aunt, to be sure; you don't suppose I meant the

girl, Blacky, do you? she's a regular poke, M'liss is."

"A poke? what's that, aunt?" asks the young lawyer. "A poke—why a poke—now, Blacky, you know you know what a poke is," retorted his aunt, who was not very ready at

giving definitions.

"No, I assure you, aunt-not at all; it's not a law term or I'd know it of course. I know what it means when it has reference to a fire or a fellow's ribs but how a lovely young female can be

called a poke."

"Good gracious me Blacky!" cried his aunt, making another independent dash across the street for no reason that any mortal could divine. Mrs. Tubinger had the habit, every now and then, of crossing from one side of the street to the other; of course she was dutifully followed by her nephew.

"Good gracious me Blacky! any goose in the world knows

what poke is."

"I vow I'm not a goose," modestly rejoins her nephew,

"though I may be a gander, ha! aunt."

"A poke—why a poke is a sort of a poky thing that hasn't spunk to say boo! to a goose," said his aunt, after which brilliant definition the young man became very cheerful and cheerfully exclaimed: "Indeed! oh! that's it; ha!" in his secret soul he admired that quality in the female mind that was "too poky to say boo! to a goose."

"What do the copy books say, aunt? 'Meekness is a quality

that highly adorneth a woman' ha!"

"It was 'modesty' in my copy book," retorted the aunt, mak-

ing another dash over the street.

"Meekness and modesty—all the same; ha! I should say," cried the young lawyer, following at her heels and thanking his stars that she would not be able to make more than two more crossings before they reached home. Nor did Mr. Sharpe think it necessary to confide to his aunt that he decidedly admired "poky" young women and that he especially admired the pokiness of Miss Mopson. The vision of her upturned eyes, as she warbled sweet words and tinkled the guitar, the broad blue ribbon around her neck, rose before his eyes and he took a secret satisfaction in the thought that such upturnings and warblings and tinklings were fitting and appropriate to the true female

Roma had been at home about a week when Mrs. Singleton thought it time that her brother should despatch her a letter. Mr. Arthur was in high good humor, he had negotiated the loan and got the money from old McFlint, principally on the idea that he was to wed the Island heiress. McFlint had had business transactions in the South and knew Roma's grandfather and felt

safe in lending money to the man who was to wed his grand-daughter. Mr. Arthur had used the few thousands so well at cards, he had won a few thousand with which he paid half of the money borrowed from his sister and yet retained in his pocket the original sum obtained from old McFlint. This state of affairs put Mr. Arthur in a very cheeerful, not to say exhilerated, state of mind. He felt quite sure that at last he had the secret of success and would go on winning. "Writing," he yawned, good naturedly, "is such an infernal bore, Cathy, I wish you'd do it for me—you know what'll please that stiff-starched girl better than I."

"Write yourself, Arthur, you can write very good love letters and make love too, very effectually, if all tales are true."

"What tales?"

"Oh! you need not think you're hid in a bushel. Mrs. Mantor Merriman thinks you a very dangerous Lothario?"

"What the deuce does she know of me? I havn't seen her these

fourteen years."

The handsome Arthur's face wore that gratified smile most men exhibit when accused of being generally dangerous to the other sex. A particular charge has a very different effect.

"That may be, but she hears all the same."

"Well, what does she hear?"

"She says you were at the bottom of the Blaine girl's ruin."

The gratified smile gave way to an angry frown.

"Mrs. Mantor Merriman is a disagreeable old gossip and I'd like to tell her so."

"Certainly she is. I told her the charge was absurd as you were in Europe at the time the girl disappeared, but she wouldn't give way—she stands to it, you were responsible."

"I wish old hags would mind their own business and leave me

alone," growled the injured Arthur.

"She tells it that old Mrs. Somebody told another old Mrs. Somebody, who told her, that the first old Mrs. Somebody was at that seaside place where the Blaine girl was with her invalid aunt, and that you flirted desperately with the girl and that everybody saw it, except the aunt who was shut up in her room, and that six months afterward the girl ran away from her home and has not been heard of since."

"It's an infernal shame," cried the indignant gentleman, kicking over an inoffensive chair in his path, "it's an infernal shame to saddle a woman's misdeeds on a fellow like that, and all because he happened to dance a few times with her; why a fellow'll have to shut himself up like a monk to keep himself out of

scandal."

"Pshaw! how does scandal damage a man? now a woman—"
"It's the very first I've heard that my name was connected
with that girl's disappearance, her family do not implicate me,
certainly; old Blaine was the first to welcome me back; he invited me to a party at his house

"And you went?" asked his sister, a curious smile on her thin

lips.

"Certainly; why should I not go? I always liked the family and visited them before I went to Europe; must a fellow cut a whole family because one of its members went to the bad?"

"Of course not! What an old gossip that Merriman woman is," continued his sister reflectively. "You danced a few times,—the way she tells it, one would suppose you and the girl were together all day and half the night, wandering in shadowy places, up to the very day the girl's father was expected to arrive. It seems the gossips had counted on the old man to call you to account, but when he arrived on the spot you had cut and run."

"Cathy," said her brother angrily, "I am astonished that you should listen to such scandal—it really is too—too vulgar—I want no more of it."

"Very well, go on with your letter."

"I'm in no mood to write."

"I will write if you will copy it."

"You ought to write," he said, with a short laugh, "it's more your love affair than mine, anyway."

So the correspondence was arranged with this division of labor. Mrs. Singleton gladly undertook the composition of the letters to be sent to the heiress, as she knew she could far excel her brother in the art of writing.

When Roma received the first letter from her wooer, she and her mother were greatly encouraged as to Mr. Ashford's condition. Roma was so constant in attendance on her grandfather that it was several days before she found time to reply to Singleton's ardent epistle, which she did as follows:

ASHCOURT, May 1st, 1839.

Mr. Arthur Singleton:

DEAR SIR:—Yours of the 10th came a few days ago, but I could not find a moment earlier to reply. We think Grandfather is better now; Mamma and I hope to see him up again, and the life of the place, as he always is when well. You ask me to write to you of my friends, home, neighbors, and negroes. I can do this if it will interest you (Singleton's letter had urged her to do this, on the flattering plea that anything concerning her, or near her, would interest him), and the task will be pleasant, for I love them all, friends, home, neighbors, and negroes. So I will take you in good faith and begin:

Eirst, in importance, and first, in love is Mame. You would never

First in importance, and first in love, is Mama. You would never take me to be Mama's daughter. She is beautiful, and I—well, I'm not in the least like her. Mamma is as fair as a lily, and gentle as a dove, with soft, brown eyes, and the sweetest face, and she never, never argues on any subject. Grandfather has often said that I ought to be a lawyer, I am naturally so disputatious. Next to Mama is dear old Grandpapa. I wish you could have known him before he was stricken down, he was a grand old man, six feet tall, broad-shouldered, with a bearing like a born ruler. Some people fancy he has a stern face, but he never is stern to Mamma or me, or the servants. Sometimes though, he storms, and his eyes flash fire, when he is aroused on political questions. He and Uncle Richard have hot discussions on politics, yet they are devoted to eachother. Uncle Richard is a Clay man and wants protective tariffs, Grand-

papa is a Calhoun man, and argues that protective tariffs rob the agriculturalist to pay tribute to the manufacturer. His especial averturalist to pay tribute to the manufacturer. His especial aversion, however, is the fish bounty. Grandpapa always wants to know why people of the South and West should be taxed to pay a New Englander for every fish he catches, any more than the New Englander should be taxed to pay the farmers for every bushel of corn or potatoes they raise? Grandpapa insists that such tariffs always stir up strife between the people who pay and the people who receive the tariffs. Grandpapa and ple who pay and the people who receive the tariffs. Grandpapa and Mama and myself are all the white persons in Ashcourt. We have an over-Mama and myself are all the white persons in Ashcourt. We have an overseer, but he and his family live a few miles off, at Richtand. Grandpapa's estate is divided in two parts, one is Ashcourt, on which we live, and the overseer lives on Richland. Now for the servants. Ours are all old family servants, and some of them we love very much, as they do us. First in importance is Mammy Rose, who was my nurse when I was small. Mammy Rose is a large woman with a very dignified air. She keeps the keys of the store rooms and linen closets, and manages the housemaids, teaching them neatness, industry, etc. Mammy Rose is not very black, she has a rather stern face, but is always good. Everyone pays her great respect, especially younger servants. Next comes Damon—Oh! I wish you could know Damon, he is the very prince of African dandies, very black, with a head that runs up like a sugar loaf, and a great pile of shining wool on the top of it, and the whitest teeth, and eyes so popped out they seem to have been laid on after the face was made. Damon is Mammy Rose's grandson and pet, she is as proud of him as can be, especially of his Chesterfieldian manners, as indeed, we all are, they be, especially of his Chesterfieldian manners, as indeed, we all are, they could not be excelled by anyone, and render him conspicuous wherever he goes. Damon would be a nice character to put in a novel, he is so peculiar; his duty is to wait on the table, answer the door bell, and go to the post office. Should you ever wish to ingratiate yourself in his good opinion, all you will have to do is to present him with a bottle of perfume he is as fond of perfume as was Mahomet himself. He is in his fume, he is as fond of perfume as was Mahomet himself He is in his highest glory when dressed up in his best, white apron, white gloves, and button-hole boquet, in waiting at some grand supper or dinner; at such times he is the envy and admiration of the African world, at least, that portion of it which happens to see him. My maid, who answers to the classical name of Thetis—contracted for convenience sake to Thetty and Damon are a dusky pair of lovers, and, as their stream of love seems to run very smoothly, they think of marriage in a month or so. Our coachman is named Tallyrand, we call him Uncle Tally, for short. Grandmother was fond of grand names, and would often induce the negro mothers to let her name their babies; in this way, we have at Ashcourt some of the most renowned names the world has ever known. Uncle Tally is an immense favorite with everybody, black or white, he is brownskinned, and stout, and has the most jovial face you ever saw, he cannot look at you without a chuckle of mirth—he is a striking contrast to your sister's coachman, that sober, pompous Mr- Puffington, who always looked as if he thought everyone not sitting on the elevated seat of a carriage, was no more than a crawling caterpillar. Have I tired out your patience with this gossiping letter? Grandfather is awake and I must close. Give my love to your sister—Conny and I will never forget her kindness.

Yours truly, Roma Charlmonte.

P. S.—I am sorry I cannot now speak any more explicitly about that

P. S.—I am sorry I cannot now speak any more explicitly about that (He had urged her to give a favorable answer to his suit). I cannot think of taking any important step without consulting Grandpapa and Mama, and of course I cannot do that now, that Grandpapa is so sick. He feels easier in his mind, because he wished to explain to me his affairs, and why he wishes to leave everything to me, instead of Mama, who, of course has the best right, but Mama concurs in Grandfather's plans and purposes, and I am sure, no matter what the law may be, I shall always recognize Mama as first in everything. Again, Goodbye.

R. C.

Singleton read this letter over twice and even then, did not know what to make of it. It was not like the answers he was

accustomed to receive to his ardent love letters. He took it to his sister to get her opinion.

"It is a very good letter," said that astute lady. "I do not see

anything to complain of."

"You don't! Well, I do. A fellow goes to the trouble of courting a girl hard, for three or four months, and he writes a tremendous love letter to her, and she writes a parcel of trash about the negroes, and the old man, and the old woman-what do I care for them?"

"You forget," said his sister, "you told her tell you all about her friends and surroundings, she has taken you at your word."

"But there isn't one word of love in it," he complained.

"Of course there isn't. She's not the sort of a girl to fling herself at a man. The fact that she writes at all is greatly in your

favor. You must reply right away."

After argument and persuasion, Mr. Arthur agreed to copy another letter of his sister's inditing; that lady sat down and surpassed herself in the beauty and passion she put into the second letter to the heiress.

"This will strike to her heart," she said, giving it to her brother, who sat smoking meditatively the while, "this is just what will take with a romantic school-girl. I must see the answer as soon as it comes. I think you will see a change in the tone."

But Mrs. Singleton was not altogether correct in her prophecy -the tone of the girl's reply was just about the same as that of the first, as the reader may see:

ASHCOURT, April 1st, 1839.

Mr. Arthur Singleton:

DEAR SIR:—Yours of the 15th instant is at hand. I am sorry you are impatient, and sorry I cannot speak more definitely, as you wish. Please bear in mind the circumstances that surround me, and you will see I cannot—cannot do otherwise at present. It would be selfish and cruel in me to give Mama any fresh subject for anxiety now that she suffers so much on Grandpapa's account. Grandpapa does not steadily improve as we hoped he would. Some days he is better, then falls back and gets worse, which discourages us deeply. Yesterday he would go over all the instructions and advice to me, which he wishes me to pursue after he is gone; he wishes me to take his place as much as possible, and save Mama all annoyance and trouble. Dr. Wilmer came to our Island yesterday and will make his home here for the present. Our old physician, who has been here twenty years, wishes to retire from practice, and Wilmer takes his place, which greatly pleases Cousin Ed Charlmonte, they are such fact friends. Crandrage is now visited by both decrease every day. fast friends. Grandpapa is now visited by both doctors every day-I must stop and go to Grandpapa.

April 14th. It is two weeks since I left off at this place—alas! a very sad and unhappy two weeks. I thought then that I would return in a few minutes, at least in an hour or so, and finish the letter. I had left Grandpapa sleeping, and, as we thought, much better, when I dropped my pen and ran to him, I saw he was worse. He had sent Uncle Tally to Richland to ring his—Uncle Tally's—father, old Daddy Dick, to see him. Daddy bick's two years older than Grandpapa, they had been boys together, D mpanions in play, companions when hunting or fishing, and had alco ways been strongly attached to each other. Daddy Dick lived on the Richland place with one of his married daughters. When Daddy Dick came in, Grandpapa was sleeping, and Daddy Dick sat down by his side until he should open his eyes and see him. It was half an hour before he awakened, when he did, a pleased smile was on his lips, as he put out his thin hand to meet the great brown one of Daddy Dick. The tears stood in the old negro's eyes, Grandpapa saw them.

"We have been good friends, Dick," he said faintly, "but the best of friends must part, Dick—the time has come."

Mama, and Mammy Rose, and Damon, were all weeping. The tears rolled down Daddy's face.

rolled down Daddy's face.

"De Lord's will be done, Mas Henry," he said, in a tone of pious resignation, for he is a very religious old man.

"Yes," said Grandpapa, with humble submission, "His will be done— His will."

The old black's feelings were deeply stirred.
"Oh! Mas Henry!" he said, "ef de Lord hab called you, is he foun' you ready?"

Grandpapa said he trusted in the goodness of his Creator—he was only a worm of the earth—a poor, helpless worm, he hoped he would find

mercy at the judgment seat.

After some more talk on religious subjects, Daddy Dick asked Grandpapa if he would like to join in prayer, Granpapa assented. First a hymn was sung. Grandpapa's voice mingled with ours, his face was placid, a happy look was in his eyes, all the pain seemed gone—yet, still we felt that he was worse. After the singing Daddy knelt down by the bed, still holding his master's wasted hand, and prayed with great feeling and fervor, more than once we heard Grandfather's reverential "amen," breathed out in a low tone. When we all rose from our knees Grandpapa lay perfectly still, his hand yet held in his old servant's. We thought he had fallen asleep. Presently Daddy Dick's countenance showed a strange anxiety, he leaned over and looked intently at his old master's white face, iety, he leaned over and looked intently at his old master's white face,

then he laid his great brown hand on his breast over the heart—
"He is gone ober to de promise' lan'," said Daddy. "He is gone ober whar de wicked cease from troublen, an' de weary is at res'—De Lord's

will be done."

Then we knew that he had left us, and, oh! such a desolation and darkmess as seemed to fall on the world!

ROMA CHARLMONTE.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW ROMA'S LETTER WAS RECEIVED BY HER LOVER.

In the highest spirits the handsome Arthur carried this second letter to his sister, to get her opinion and advice as to what should now be done and said.

"It's your matrimonial chess board," he said cheerfully. "Now that the girl's got the dead man's shoes, I suppose you'll

be for pushing matters, eh, Cathy?"

"As fast as pen and ink can do it," said his sister. "You must not let her forget you for a moment. She'll not marry you in a hurry, but she must promise, and with a girl of that sort, to promise is to perform."

"I'd like to hurry up, now she's her own mistress; besides, I am getting rather hard up again, Cathy, my infernal luck's come

back."

"Just as I predicted; I hope now, Arthur," his sister said.

with a grand air, "that you see the wisdom of having an assured income, something to fall back on when cards go against you."

"As though I ever doubted the wisdom of having an assured income—it was the assured wife I did not want, not the in-

"Never mind that, you must urge the girl to let you visit her. Tell her you can no longer stand the absence, life has lost all its interest for you, you feel so much for her in her grief, and all that. Sit down until I sketch the letter—there's a paper, read and smoke, it won't take me long, I know exactly what should be said."

She sat down at her writing desk and wrote a beautiful letter, tender, feeling, passionate, prayerful—more than all, prayerful for permission to go to the girl in her affliction, "if for but one

These letters, splendid as art compositions, were bound to have their effect upon the girl, who above all other intellectual merit, most admired literary; still, not yet had she confessed to herself, her lover, or her mother, that any very serious love was awakened in her heart. She was strongly disposed in his favor, she admired his beauty of person and manners, his style of writing, she dwelt on these attractions in the few dreams she had time to indulge in by day. So active was now her life, her sleep by night was sound and dreamless. She had not yet spoken to her mother on the subject, she put off doing so from day to day, Wilmer was unwilling to give her any new cause for anxiety. the only one on the Island who knew that she corresponded with Singleton. He discovered it one morning some weeks after Mr. Ashford's death. He found her sitting alone in her favorite seat, overlooking the wide, wide sea, reading a letter. He saw the post mark, "New York City," and his heart gave a jealous bound. He had flattered himself that the man had ceased his pursuit. A bitter moroseness surged up in the place of the pleas-

ant good humor he commonly felt.

"I begin to think," he said, scowling out on the waves that rolled in and broke on the sands below, "I really begin to think," with all the other fools in the world, that intellect is of no use

to woman."

"What has occurred to make you think that?" said Roma, turning her dark eyes seriously upon him. "What has disturbed

you, Wilmer?"
"What good does the possession of a bright intellect do a woman? It does not serve to protect her from the wiles of designing knaves, it only adds to her misery by making her feel more keenly than a stupider woman would feel."

"But what calls forth such reflections?" persisted the girl.

May I ask who wrote that letter?"

"Yes; you may ask." "And you will answer?" "Yes; I will answer."

"Who?"

"Singleton." "Ah!—" he sprang up from his seat by her side as if a serpent had stung him.

"What is it, Wilmer?" startled at his unusual emotion.

"Let me read that letter—let me see what he says to you—forgive me !-do not think me impertinent!"

His face was white and stern as he stood before her.

"Impertinent? Can I ever think that, or anything unkind of

you, Wilmer, after all your devotion to poor Grandpapa?"
"There's nothing I would not do to serve you, Roma," he said, with unutterable yearning and unutterable misery in his eyes. "Why can you not trust me as a brother-I will serve you as one, as the most devoted and true brother,-"

"I can, I do trust you as a brother." "Let me see that letter, then."

She yielded to his eagerness and put the letter in his hand.

He turned away his face so that she could not see it as he She watched keenly to note the effect it produced, she knew Wilmer did not like, or admire her lover, she did not guess that the intensity and power of the dislike amounted to deadly aversion. So strong was the feeling in the young man's breast at that moment, he felt the necessity of controlling and concealing it; to gain a moment's time to master it, he rushed down the cliff to the water's brink, bathed his brow in the briny waves, wiped it with his handkerchief, and returned to Roma.

"You are not well, Wilmer," she said, attributing the paling and flush of his face to physical causes. "You study too much, you sit up too late-O, I know your ways, you are often up until two or three in the morning. I sometimes get up to attend to Mama, Mama does not sleep; I sit and talk to her, and see the light in your window, and Mammy Rose says the number of candles you use is positively runinous. I shall get Mammy Rose to limit you, just as they did me once when I was seized with an ambitious fit. Grandpapa himself used to cut my candle in two and only gave me the shorter part."

The young fellow protested that he was quite well-he never hurt himself studying. He returned the letter; one thing about it had surprised him—the beauty and power of its diction, he felt he had underrated his rival's ability. He distrusted as much,

but feared more. He was very wretched.

"You have confidence in that man?" he asked, "You believe that he is honest, true?—that he loves you?"

"You see what he says."

"Says?" he repeated with bitter derision. "A man can say anything to further his purpose."

What purpose? What do you mean—that he only affects the

passion he talks of?"

"I think—I feel, that this man is false, is designing, is unworthy."

"You believe then, as Grandpapa did when I was a little girl,

that I am not one to win an ardent love? Alas!"

"For God's sake; Roma, do not take such absurd notions into your head! Do not so belie yourself and me! If I think this man is not true, it is because I do not think him intellectually or morally capable of the truth. He is not your equal. Roma, have you answered that letter?"
"I have."

"Favorably?"

"You may see for yourself-it is not yet dispatched on its

She took a letter from her pocket—it was the one relating her

grandfather's death—and handed it to him.

Wilmer read it, at first rapidly, his eyes devoured the characters, then he re-read slowly, reflectingly, a more calm expression came into his troubled face.

"Ah!" he said, giving back the letter, "a load is off my mind -you do not yet love that man. Roma, I hope you never mav."

"I really think, Wilmer, you are prejudiced. Why do you think so badly of him? What has he done, what left undone to make you feel so strongly?"

Wilmer was silent. He had nothing but his instincts to ad-

duce, and he could not bring them into court.

CHAPTER XXII.

THEY GATHER TOGETHER TO READ THE WILL BUT NO WILL IS FOUND.

Roma's uncle Richard had been given the key to the drawer containing the will; his brother did this weeks before his demise. There was no curiosity as to the nature of the will, the master of Ashcourt had talked of it often enough to his relatives. Every white person on the Island understood that Roma was to be legally invested with the estate, negroes and personal property, that her mother, legally, would not own a foot of ground or a slave and that this was done, not because he loved his daughter less than his granddaughter, but because he wished to shut off all claims his daughter's husband would set up, should his wife inherit the Ashcourt estate. The reading of the will was deferred some weeks on account of the serious indisposition of Mr. Richard Ashford after his brother's burial.

At length they assembled in the library where stood the old antique desk with its numerous small pigeon holes and drawers, in one of which the will had been locked. The two Charlmontes, father and son, Wilmer, Roma and her Uncle Richard were present. Roma's mother had not left her room since her fath-

er's death.

Mr. Richard Arhford unlocked the drawer and took out a bundle of papers, he looked them over and took out another bundle and looked them over, and still a third, but the will was in none of them; he emptied the drawer, still no will, he begun to feel a little annoyed but continued his search until every drawer and pigeon hole had been examined and yet the will was not found, then he went over the papers, the younger Charlmonte assisting him; no vestige of a will was found.

"There may be a secret drawer," suggested Wilmer. Search was made and no secret drawer was found.

"My brother certainly told me I would find the will in this drawer," said Mr. Richard Ashford, "he gave me the key and talked over the provisions of the will ten days before he died."

"It was a mystery no one understood. The gentlemen begun to look at one another, a dull and distresed amazement in their eyes, they fully recognized the evil that would ensue if no will was found. No effort was spared, a close and general search was instigated, every nook and corner in the library was gone over, every paper unfolded and examined but all in vain. After consulting together they determined to search the whole house, every room in the house; still to no purpose. By this time there was a general consternation, the dreadful fear that the disreputable husband would step in and become master of the place dis-turbed every mind. The distress of Roma's mother was very great; it required all of Roma's time and tenderness to soothe and console that unhappy lady the dread of her husband's arrival and presence was so great it completely unnerved her. Charlmonte was dispatched to Mr. Henry Ashford's friend and lawver. Mr. Richmond, in the hope that he had retained a duplicate will. Charlmonte returned with the discouraging information, Mr. Richmond had no duplicate will. After all hope was over a great depression fell on every friend of the family. The question was what next to do? What could they do if the husband appeared to assert his rights? The whole state of South Carolina stood at the husband's back to help him obtain and hold the property which his wife's father had left.

"He'll play havoc with it," said Mr. Richard Ashford.

It was the hope of every heart that the man was dead and out of the way for ever. Mr. Richard Ashford said that the mistress of the "Emporium of Fashion" was a relative of the dreaded husband and doubtless in communication with him—if he were yet alive. It was considered best to say nothing of the lost will lest Miss "Dawkshiter" might write to her relative and bring him to the Island. Wilmer remained at Ashcourt, the others returned to their homes leaving Roma and her mother a prey to the most painful anxiety; every ring at the door bell startled them, every boat that crossed over from the main land gave them uneasiness. One of the windows of Mrs. Charlmonte's room looked to the main land, commanding a view of the water over which the ferry boats crossed. Twenty times a day would the anxious mother

watch from that window and if she saw a boat coming over would examine it through a field glass and fancy she recognized the man

she most dreaded to see.

While combing Roma's hair Thetty told her young mistress that she had been to get a ribbon from "Miss Dawkshiter" an' "Miss Dawkshiter" had axed her so many imperent questions bout Ole Master's will, and who was gwine ter get all Ole Master's propty?

"What did you reply, Thetty?" asked Miss Charlmonte, the

dark dread heavy on her heart.

"I telled Miss Dawkshiter in cose Mis Calline an' Miss Roma is gwine ter get Ole Master's propty—who else got any right to get it I'd like ter know? Den she sorter laugh to hersef an' say she didn' know but Ole Massa might a' lef' somebody else suffin."

A few days after Roma went for a walk, when tired she seated herself on the ledge overlooking the sea and waited for Damon who was coming from the post office. In the sad life of anxiety she was now living Singleton's letters were looked for as the one bright event. Damon whistled gaily as he came along, his popeyes staring straight before him, seeming to have no more thought of the future than any one of the gay birds flitting through the air.

"If that horrible man comes," thought the girl looking at the black dandy as he affectedly picked his way from side to side to avoid the dust, his straw hat set jauntily on one side of his woolly head, "what a change he may make in your condition—poor thing! he may sell you away from all your friends; you may fall in the hands of cruel task masters—Damon! Damon!"

She called him aloud, he turned, stopped whistling, took off his hat with a Chesterfieldian bow, laid his big hand encased in white cotton gloves on the spot which he supposed covered his

neart:

"Lor'! Miss Roma you starts me so sudden it sots my heart to

pappitatin' drefful."

The anxiety of mind endured by his mistress had brought on a nervous affection of the heart. It was Damon's last affectation to suffer from palpitation of the heart also; he imagined it must be peculiarly a "fus' quality" ailment as he had never happened to hear of any cases among "po" white folks" and the very fact that so grand a lady as his mistress, Old Master's daughter, had the complaint was enough to stamp it as aristocratic in the highest degree or "fus' quality" which was the same thing.

"Any letters for me Damon?" asked the girl not noticing his

affectation.

The negro did not know a letter in the book, nevertheless he knew the general aspect of the names of each person in Ashcourt to whom letters and papers were sent and commonly managed to deliver them to the right persons. The black dandy began to fumble in the mail bags, drawing out one after another, papers and letters, eying each with an air of solemn intentness, shaking his head, and diving down for another.

"Yer's two come fur Dr. Wilmer," he said, "and yer's a paper fur Dr. Wilmer, an' yer's somefin come for Miss Calline, an' sho nuff! yer's one fur Miss Roma. I made sho dar was two for Miss Roma—dar hit."

He presented it with a bow holding it delicately between his gloved forefinger and thumb. Roma sat down and looked at the unopened letter, her heart beat fast, she knew well from whom it came, it was Singleton's reply to Roma's letter relating her grandfather's death, it was a powerful, pleading, beseeching letter. So deeply did it touch the girl's heart she resolved to speak at once to her mother, resolved to disclose the whole story. She started home intent on this purpose; when within a few yards of the house she was startled by a wild scream—a shriek—a succession of shrieks, as if reason had suddenly flashed from some unhappy mind and left it a prey to madness and despair. Roma ran to the house and up the stairs to that terrifying sound. The servants, in wild consternation, crowded around their mistress who lay on the floor now silent and insensible. They lifted her to the bed and used such restoratives as they knew of until Wilmer, who was sent for, should arrive. If recovered from one swoon she fell into another, until her system succumbed to an anodyne. Then Roma and Wilmer begun to search for the cause of the trouble. Roma had left her mother rather more cheerful than she had been since the failure to find the will. Damon said that when he came with the mail and went to give his mistress a letter he found her sitting on the sofa as well as usual. The letter was looked for, and when found the cause of the shock was made plain. Wilmer and Roma read that letter with white faces and agitated hearts. The very address Roma thought was enough to kill her mother:

To Mrs. Caroline Hillyard (sometimes called Mrs. Caroline Charlmonte), Ash court, Ashford Isle, S. C.

My Dear Wife:—I have just learned of your father's death. As he was the cause of all the trouble between you aud me I hope, now that he is out of the way, we may live together once more in that peace and affection proper to the married life. You may expect me home almost any hour after you get this letter. I wish to know what disposition your father was a fair and affection proper to the second of the sec hour after you get this letter. I wish to know what disposition your father made of his property; I trust, before leaving this world, he became sensible of the great wrong he did to his daughter's husband. You must be aware of the fact that I am your lawful husband and as you are now the mistress of Ashcourt I am the master. I hope, now that you are older, you have come to recognize the wisdom of the law which holds a man as head of the family; the laws of God and man have established the husband as the head, yet your father chose to set aside sacred and civil laws and induced you to withdraw from your husband's control contrary to the divine will as well as the wisdom of man. I hope your father saw his error before he died. I hope you are now ready to return to your duty as my wife as I shall immediately return to my duty as your husband.

Your affectionate husband,

Benjamin Franklin Hillyard.

"Is there nothing we can do?" asked the girl with white lips is there no way we can keep that dreadful man out of the house? Is he really to come here—master?"

Wilmer was silent, he could see no way of keeping a man out of a house, when the whole State of South Carolina was pushing him in.

The two uncles were sent for, but what could they do? If the law made the man master of Ashcourt they were as powerless as

ants to resist the law.

The dreadful news that "dat ar oudacious husban" o' Miss Calline's was comin' for to set hissef up master o' de Ashcote folks" spread among the negroes, and set them in a turmoil of anxiety. Such was the demoralization all work ceased; they collected in groups before their cabin doors and talked by the hour. The negroes who had known the man during his brief reign at Richland were in great demand as authorities to give accounts of the nature and character of the new master they dreaded. Tallyrand was interviewed a dozen times a day by deputations of darkies. desiring to hear the account of his incarceration in the traders' yard, put there by "dat ar oudacious man what Miss Calline went an" married unbeknown to Ole Mas Henry."

The uncles sent to the city for the family lawyer, Mr. Richmond. Mr. Richmond was laid up with an attack of rheumatism and sent Mr. Precedent Tome, a very learned and able gentleman of the bar, whom Mr. Richmond had recently taken into his firm. The arrival of this very learned gentleman gave great satisfaction and raised high hopes in the breasts of the two uncles. They had heard wonders of Mr. Tome's ability; it was generally conceded that what Mr. Tome did not know of law was not worth knowing, and if there was any way to get ahead of the objectiona-

ble husband, Mr. Tome would be the man to point it out.

Mr. Tome was tall and angular, a sallow hue was spread over his whole person, complexion, hair and eyes were all of a "whatness" to borrow Mammy Rose's description to Tallyrand, as the two talked over affairs in the kitchen. Mr. Tome's eye-balls appeared to be preternaturally large. He had the habit, while listening to a client's statement of his case, of dropping his sallow lids over his sallow eyeballs, spreading out his ten fingers and gently tapping the five tips of one hands against the five tips of the other, all the while the large eyeballs rolling about, up and down and from side to side under their skinny covering. Such was the curiously restive behaviour of Mr. Tome's eyeballs as he listened to Mr. Richard Ashford's statement of the case, every other eye in the room was fixed upon them in a sort of wondering expectancy or fear that they would make their escape and roll out of their sockets.

"As I understand the case, my good sir," said Mr. Tome, with an air of profound cogitation, "it is quite simple—quite so indeed. First, (gently tapping his ten finger tips together) first, the man Hillyard is the lady's legal husband—that is admit-

ted."

"That is admitted," replied Mr. Ashford, with a sigh, his gaze

anxiously riveted on the rolling balls under the sallow lids of the legal gentleman.

"Secondly," continued the legal gentleman, "no will was

left.'

"Pardon me, the will was left but not found," hastily corrected

Mr. Ashford.

"All the same in law, my dear sir—all the same in law," replied Mr. Tome, his eyeballs rolling about with furious agitation.

"It may be all the same in law but it is not the same in fact," persisted Mr. Ashford, "my brother told me he had a will—I know there was a will because he said there was."

"Precisely—no doubt of that—none in the world," said Mr. Tome, suavely, "nevertheless, my dear sir, the statement wont

stand legal tests-not at all-not at all."

During the utterance of this learned and lucid opinion Mr. Tome's eyeballs went on in that wonderful way as if they certainly would jump out but for the fact that the sallow lids shut down and held them in. Poor Mr. Ashford looked on with painful

anxiety.

"The law, my dear sir," resumed Mr. Tome, authoritatively, "is, so to speak, very explicit and emphatic in defining a husband's marital rights, very; marital rights form the very foundation, as we may say, of our civilized society—the pillars. Every husband, my dear sir, whether objectionable or not, is supported in his rights by the wisdom of the—Law."

This last word was pronunced by Mr. Tome with a reverential awe as if in his mind's eye, before his spiritual vision, his physical being darkened by his sallow lids, loomed up mighty and ma-

jestic as a god that power called LAW.

Poor Mr. Ashford groaned aloud. All hope of escape was fast fleeing from Roma and her friends, they too well knew that the law supported a man in his marital rights, that is it gave to the husband every particle of property the wife might inherit or earn by her own labor. Simple-minded folks, not learned in the law, might call this marital wrongs but the legal mind saw in it only

the beauty of justice and right.

Roma's friends had hoped that by some legal trick the plain letter of the law might be evaded; if the learned and astate Mr. Tome could not devise or suggest any trick there was no longer room for hope. Mr. Tome was candid enough to confess he saw no way of evading the law. If the man were truly the woman's legal husband and the property had descended to the woman, in fact and law, the husband was at that very moment the true owner of the property, and could take possession of it any moment he saw fit.

The younger Charlmonte suggested that the man might be bought off, that a certain portion of the proceeds of the estate could be set aside for his use on condition that he leave the Island, and his wife in peace in the home she had lived in so long.

Mr. Tome's eyeballs went into convulsions at this suggestion, he sagely remarked, gently touching his finger tips together, "that it would be a good plan, a very good plan, a most excellent plan, if the husband would consent to it—a very comfortable plan all around, certainly—if the husband agreed to it."

"You think he will not agree?" asked the younger Charlmonte, whose simple mind thought equity ought always to rule

as law.

"Certainly not," replied old Mr. Ashford, "the man is a dog, he will do nothing generous, gentlemanly or just, he will sieze and spend all which the law allows him to take."

"Quite natural," said Mr. Tome, tenderly tapping his ten finger tips together while his large eyeballs excitedly rolled about, "quite natural indeed; men, my dear sir, usually avail themselves of all the rights and privileges the law in its wisdom bestows upon them—quite natural."

"The law then is the wrong-doer," said Roma, who had hitherto silently listened, "law then is the robber, the criminal, the brigand, which robs my mother, and the man is only the miserable tool of the law."

Mr. Precedent Tome shot one slight glance from under his sallow lids at the young person who gave utterance to such absurd, not to say treasonable sentiments, perceiving; as Mr. Blackstone Coke Sharpe would describe it, only a "female mind," Mr. Tome very naturally thought the "female mind's" utterances beneath his notice, and turned his attention to the male minds present.

"May I ask," he suavely begun in a gentle, confidential, insinuating tone, "may I ask—ehem! if there is any possibility of a—that is, can we not—ehem! bring about a—reconciliation between this married pair?"

Mr. Tome's eyeballs gently and mildly rolled around under their lids as if softened and sweetened memories of married life

pervaded his legal mind.

Roma was up in arms, the words reconciliation roused her very soul to rebellion.

"Reconciliation—never!" she said, her dark face glowing with an inward light, "if we are to be beggars—so be it; never reconciliation at such a price as we will have to pay for it."

Mr. Tome again shot a glance at the "female mind" which so unexpectedly raised its puny power to front and flout the majesty of the Law, and as his sallow lids hastily snapped down again the balls went into a mild and ameliorated convulsion, nothing a "female mind" could say was worthy of any more decided action on the part of learned and legal eyeballs. Mr. Tome, following the custom of his deity, the Law, which now and then under peculiar circumstances condescended to recognize the existence of the female mind, ventured to indulge the weakness of a sly glance at that insignificant object, yet rightly feeling that legal dignity forbade any more pointed notice, Mr. Tome ad-

dressed his learning and his law entirely to the male minds.

present, utterly ignoring the female.

"Circumstances," begun Mr. Tome, with that air of legal authority so well calculated to impress his hearers, "as you have doubtless had occasion to observe, my dear sirs, often alter cases, it not infrequently occurs that ladies—ehem!—have the happy facility of—adaptability—quite proper and natural to the—female mind—peculiarly fit, right and proper to adapt themselves to their husband's character disposition and circumstances—quite to females, quite so indeed, in harmony, if we may so speak (here Mr. Tome's uneasy eyeballs manifested a violent desire to roll upward as if they wanted to go on an exploring expedition through the upper part of his cranium, or was it a reverential fit that seized them?) with the divine law of Heaven."

Yes, it must have have been a reverential fit that suddenly overleapt the legal. As everyone sat silent and expectant Mr.

Tome proceeded:

"In the present case, gentlemen, as you will perceive, the wife has now everything to gain by the exercise of that happy power of adaptibility so—so beneficially bestowed upon the female mind—and nothing to lose. When the estrangement took place the situation was reversed—exactly, then the wife had everything to gain by not adapting herself to her husband's character, on the contrary she, at that time, found it to her interest to abandon her husband and adapt herself to her father's character, situation and circumstances consequently, as you know, she sought her father's protection from the husband. There is now no father to save her from her husband therefore reconciliation—"

Roma could stand this no longer she stood up straight, slender,

flameful, her dark eyes lightened.

"Now there is no father to save her but there is a daughter," she said in a tone of intense but suppressed passion, "your accursed law may rob us of our own and send us out penniless on the world, but while there are rags in the city's streets and paper mills to buy them we will fish the gutters for rags and sell them for bread rather than submit to reconciliation with a man my mother loaths."

At this moment Damon came in with a card. Mr. Ashford took it.

"The man is here," said the old man, trembling all over.

A death-like silence fell on the house. Roma, as white as a marble statue was the first to speak.

"If the man is to be put over us by law—if he takes possession, we must abandon the premises, a hollow tree will be preferable."

"Do not act too hastily," said her uncle, "there is no need to go at once. Go to your mother now and comfort her as you can."

"Reconciliation," softly breathed Mr. Tome as Roma swept out into the hall and up the stairway to her mother's chamber, is the only remedy now in sight."

The man so dreaded entered the room, Damon ushered him in and politely gave him a chair, the other men present looked at him in dumb and indignant astonishment. The new master nodded his head by way of greeting, his manner was bold, swaggering and defiant.

"Good evening, good people, all," he said, with an affected grin which did not indicate much pleasure in the meeting. "Delighted to see so many friends at Ashcourt, hope you're all well and will stay and dine with us, my wife will be delighted to see

you—as I am—ha! ha!"

If glances had power to kill, the new master would have fallen then the first moment of his entrance into the house he intended to rule over. It was indeed a trial to those proud, imperious planters to witness the insolent air of this interloper; they looked on him with fierce sternness.

"You are not as cordial as you might be, gentlemen," sneered the new master, "perhaps you don't recognize me. I am your niece's husband, I've come to live at home with my wife and by

I mean to do it."

The man's manner was so offensive, so vulgarly aggressive young Charlmonte's impulse was to resent, he sprang forward, his arm raised, his eyes fierce and flaming, the man dodged behind a table and from that rampart glared at his assailant.

"Don't touch him, don't foul your hand by striking a dog," said Charlmonte's father, seizing his son by the arm.

"You may kill me—you are half a dozen to one—I expected no better from my wife's kin—you may murder me if you choose but you don't mend matters—I made my will before trusting myself among you, my brother is my heir-now kill me if you choose."

"No one wants to murder you, you deserve to die but gentle-men are not executioners," said the elder Charlmonte, then hastily scrawling a line on a piece of paper, after passing it from one to another it was finally given to the lawyer who nodded in assent and with one accord the planters left the room to Mr.

Tome and the new master.

"We can do nothing except by aid of law, we had better go and leave the man to Mr. Tome; authorize him to make a leave the man to Mr. Tome; authorize him to make a compromise if possible." This was the paper left with Mr. Tome but that gentleman saw no legal way out of the difficulty, no weak spot to pick a flaw in the new master's right to rule the estate; nevertheless he made an effort, he made a nice little persuasive speech on the beauty of harmony, on the painfulness of neighborhood quarrels and appealed to Mr. Hillyard's sense of the befitting and proper thing to do under the circumstances, since his wife was estranged from him, would it not be better for all parties to make a compromise, an amicable settlement?

"What do you mean?" asked the unabashed new master, "whatever you've got to say, say it right out, no beating about the bush, my mind's made up, my wife's kin may go to the devil and my wife too if she doesn't choose to behave as a Christian wife should, love and obey her husband as she promised at the altar. Now you just fire away and give us what you've got."

Then Mr. Tome said it would be the right and gentlemanly

Then Mr. Tome said it would be the right and gentlemanly thing for Mr. Hillyard to leave his wife in peace in her father's house, her old home, and secure her a handsome portion

of the proceeds of the place."

"I'll be hanged if I do," shouted the new master, "I'll give my wife board and clothes as long as she lives with me and behaves herself—if she gets to cutting up and capers off, I'll make no settlement you may just set that down, Mr. Lawyer and let her kin know it too."

"A sense of equity, my dear sir—you must see that equity if not law would advise you to maintain your wife in the style she has been accustomed to live, the property came by her father."

"Exactly, the law says what's a wife's is her husband's, if you

are a lawyer you must know that."

"Precisely," admitted Mr. Tome, his ten fingers tapping their tips tenderly together, his eyeballs gently rolling about under their lids.

"Very well then you admit the property is mine, now isn't it rather cool to ask a man to take a part of his property when he can take the whole? You may just tell my wife's kin that I know my rights under the law and I don't intend to give up one d—n inch of 'em. This is my house and the niggers of this estate are my niggers, I am the master and by thunder! I intend to stay master."

Mr. Tome left the house and reported to the gentlemen that he saw no remedy except in reconciliation. The whole state of South Carolina stood at the back of the husband and supported

him in his robbery of the woman he had married.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE OBJECTIONABLE HUSBAND ASSUMES THE MASTERSHIP.

The condition of Roma's mother was not only pitiable, but alarming. She was prostrated, mind and body, her daughter kept close attendance night and day. Had a lion from the African desert been unchained in the house, hungry for her blood, she could have been in no more terror than she was at the knowledge that her husband was on the premises, free to come and go whithersoever he willed. Every footstep in the hall made her cower and shrink lest he should force his way into her room and claim from her the obedience of a wife. In addition to this, she was tortured by self-condemnation; she felt that all this trouble had come through her, she declared she would willingly throw herself into the sea if her death would reinstate Roma in her rights.

"We do not blame you, Mama, indeed, indeed, you are not to

blame," the daughter would say, attempting to calm her mother's regrets, as she tenderly clasped her in her arms. "Anyone is liable to make mistakes, it was not your fault, Mama, that the man hid his bad qualities from you until it was too late—no indeed, Mama, never for one minute do we blame you, dear, darling Mama, and if you will only bear it patiently and get well, Mama, oh! what grand schemes I have! I have been talking them over with Dr. Calyx and Wilmer, I shall make a fortune for Mama, I shall go to work—I mean to study medicine—oh! I believe I shall make a splendid physician, Mama, so you see, Mama, when I am a doctor—just imagine, Dr. Charlmonte, riding over the country, making so much money! Why, Mama, it will be almost as if you had a son, a grown son, you know you have always wanted a son, now I shall be your son, and you are to lean on me, just as if I were a great big, bearded fellow, six feet tall—"

But the wan smile that the poor mother called up to please her daughter, faded all too quickly, and the regrets and remorse came up again to overwhelm and pain. She wrung her hands and accused herself of bringing ruin on her child, of embittering the latter years of her father's life, of disgracing the name her daughter bore—she had given up that honorable name to take a gambler's, she had yielded to an aberration of mind, and sacrificed all—all, for a caprice.

Again and again Roma went over the old arguments, again and again she strove to convince her mother that she was more sin-

ned against than sinning.

"The law has no right to hold a woman forever to a mistake!" cried the girl, when her mother's sufferings and wrongs filled her with resentment, not against her mother, but against the law which put her so completely in the power of a selfish man.

"It is the law I blame, Mama, never you. When you discovered the true character of the man, you left him at once, that was right, that was pure, you did not continue to contaminate yourself by contact with an ignoble nature, a false, deceiving nature—Oh! had you done that, Mama, then indeed you might reproach yourself. You have done no wrong. Mama, you were simply deceived, that is all. The law does wrong; the law robs you of your father's estate and gives it to an unworthy man, the law holds you to a gambler you loathe—I hate and scorn the law! It is as silly as it is wicked. Were I a man, I would devote my life to bring about a change, to wipe out all such laws—but, alas! my hands are tied—my hands are tied!"

Roma and her friends thought, as they could not get the man out of the house, the next best thing was to come out themselves. The Charlmontes invited Roma and her mother to make Charlmonte Hall their home. Wilmer advised the change. Roma and her mother consented. Mammy Rose was to accompany them; Mrs. Charlmonte had been so long accustomed to Mammy Rose that no other servant could supply her place. A warm

bright day was selected on which make the move, a day on which it was understood that the new master would be absent. The servants understood that he was going to Richland, to be absent a week, to look after the work on that place. Thus far, much to the negroes disgust and indignation, he had devoted his time and attention to the Ashcourt place, "medlin' whar he got no business ter," as the blacks said.

The large family coach was brought out. Mammy Rose, a tall, strong woman, was to sit in the carriage and hold the invalid in her motherly arms. Thetty was to go in the little light wagon, with baskets and boxes and paper parcels, etc. Jake, the stable boy, who, under Tallyrand's supervision, looked after the horses, was to take the trunks containing the clothing for the party. It was supposed that the master had set off for Richland, but it was a mistake. Just as the arrangements were completed and Mammy Rose and Thetty had gone up to bring down their mistress, the new master rode up. Tallyrand stood by the carriage door, Jake was already mounted on the wagon with the baggage. The new master eyed these preparations with curiosity. An angry light came into his soulless black eyes.

"What's the row?" he sternly asked.

Tallyrand politely replied, that he was going to drive his mistress to Charlmonte Hall.

"And what is all that?" he asked, shaking his riding whip in

the direction of Jake and the baggage.

When he was told that it belonged to the mistress and Mammy Rose, he flew into a tearing rage, ordered it taken off and carried back into the house, and swore he would flog any negro to an inch of his life who dared step his or her foot off the Ashcourt grounds without his permission; he would let them know he was their master, and he meant to hold a tight rein over them; they had better look out and mind what they were about.

Tally was ordered to take the carriage back and put it up, and to remember that he, Master Hillyard, was to be consulted be-

fore it was brought out in the future.

Roma heard the latter part of this extraordinary harangue: white as a sheet, aghast and astounded at the audacious extent to which the new master meant to carry his authority, she ran back to her room, calmed her nerves as well as she could, cudgeled her brain to devise some trifling excuse for deferring the move, lest the true reason, if given, would too severely affect her mother. After a hurried conversation with Mammy Rose, Roma, smiling and with a serene brow, stepped into her mother's room and said they would be forced to put off going to Charlmonte Hall that day; Uncle Tally could not use the carriage, something was wrong about it, they would wait until it was in better order, besides, Dr. Wilmer thought she would be stronger in a few days and better able to bear the journey.

Not yet had either Roma or her mother met this dreaded and detested master. He did not stay much in the house, and they kept closely to their own apartments, their meals were served in their own rooms. Wilmer, at the urgent request of Roma, remained in Ashcourt, going to his office in the village every morning. Hillyard and the young physician frequently met in the hall and on the stair steps, they treated each other with cool politeness; Wilmer prudently resolved to give him no cause for complaint, believing by remaining in the house he was of some service and comfort to the two unhappy ladies. It would be almost impossible to describe the state of feeling in the negro cabins. Nothing was thought of, nothing talked of, but the new master. If the negroes hated the master, the ill-feeling was re-

turned on the master's part.

All the gaiety of the plantation life was gone. The negroes gave an unwilling obedience, gave that lagging, slack obedience that always comes from unloving servitors. It began to be observed that the new master took unusual precaution to guard himself. Whom did he fear?—The whites, or the blacks, or both? The latter certainly thought they were the objects of his fear, and began to scorn as well as hate. He never walked out, or rode out, or went on the water, without being armed to the teeth, and guarded by two rough specimens of the white race, whom he had brought with him from the city. These two attended him day and night, sleeping in an ante-room, arms by their side. The trio were looked upon with scornful hatred by the negroes, and a stern wrath by the whites. The old lady, Miss Susan Stokes, whom the Island girls had brought with them from the Finisher Institute, came over from Ash Hall to stay with Roma in her time of trouble. Miss Susan had, as the young ladies of the Finisher Institute expressed it, "for ages and ages" been the seamstress who did plain sewing for the girls of the Institute.

It chanced one day that Miss Susan related to the Island girls the poor little story of her life, how, when only sixteen, her father, a Methodist circuit rider, died, leaving her penniless; how she was at school at the time and had to quit school, and immediately begin to work for her bread; and how she had taken up the trade of sewing, and for forty years had been stitching, stitching, stitching, from daylight until dark, and on until midnight; and had never earned enough to lay by a cent, pinch and half-starve herself as she might, so small was the price paid for needle work; and how, now that she was getting old and her eyes failing, she began to fear that she would live longer than she could see to sew, and would become dependent upon charity, upon the poor house for her daily bread; and how, during all the forty years that she had toiled, she had never had but one resting spell, and that was three days of "heavenly grace," as the good old lady expressed it, at a Methodist camp meeting. These three days Miss Susan's memory dwelt upon as indeed heavenly. The cool shade under the grand old forest trees, the singing of a thousand voices united in pious praise to God, the hospitality that called up and fed and lodged the poor and the rich without money and without price, the absence of any thought of labor, the apparent forgetfulness of all carking cares, of all the disagreements and discords that harass the daily lives of saints or sinners, all these causes combined, made those three days a heavenly and spiritual feast to the poor

friendless, over-worked, joyless old seamstress.

This story had so touched the hearts of the two girls whose whole lives had passed like a happy dream, that the idea entered their young heads of doing some service for the desolate old creature, something that would lighten and brighten her sunless life; yet the word, sunless, could hardly be applied to Miss Susan's life; a sunny light shone within—the light of a cheerful, hopeful spirit. Never a repining word, never a murmur passed her faded lips at the dispensation of Providence, she really believed that the good Lord intended it all for her good, either in this world or the next. So the two girls wrote home to their mothers asking permission to bring Miss Susan home with them.

"If she thinks a camp meeting up here in this country is a paradise, what will she not think of our paradise, with its birds and flowers and breezes, and the blue skies and wide, wide waters?" Roma wrote, "And we wish to give her at least six months of our paradise, Mamma, she can stay part of the time at Ash Hall and part at Ashcourt, and I'm sure, Mamma, we can make out to her that she is very useful, she can make caps for the old negroes, and flannel things for the babies, and we can make out to her that such work is worth — anything you choose to pay, Mamma; you've no idea how very, very little she gets for work

up here.'

Thus it happened that the old maid came down to the Island with the girls. At first she seemed to imagine that daily work was to be done in return for the food and lodging and small pay she received, but it did not take long to discover that the work was a fiction, that Ash Hall and Ashcourt both possessed accomplished black sewing women, who had nothing to do but look after the family sewing. For some little time Miss Susan did not know how to enjoy herself, she had worked so hard and so unremittingly all her life, she did not know how not to work. She would often of a morning come to the girls—

"What shall I do to-day?"

"What ever you like, Miss Susan."

"But, my dear, I have no work."
"Then do no work, Miss Susan."

"But, my dear, I am lost without work."

"Then go and walk about in the garden, Miss Susan, or on the

beach, and find yourself."

This had occurred in the hopeful time, before Roma's grand-father's demise. After his death Miss Susan busied herself assisting Roma in attendance on her mother. When Mrs. Charlmonte was well enough for both of the white ladies to go out for

a walk, Roma would take the old lady out with her, and when she visited the negro cabins Roma observed that, although the old lady felt very kindly toward the blacks, and looked upon slavery as a very wicked thing, still she felt a strong repugnance to any personal contact with them. When she saw Roma and Conny take the little, fat black babies in their arms and play with them, a certain peculiar expression of disgust would come over the old maid's face.

Roma remonstrated.

"I do not understand how you can feel that way, Miss Susan," she said. "I saw you take Ponto in your arms the other day and kiss him on his forehead. Now, a fat black baby is nicer than a puppy; a black baby is human and has a soul, a puppy has not."

"The old lady felt condemned and made a laudable effort to cure herself of this wicked repugnance toward creatures with immortal souls. She succeeded so far as to once take up in her hands a lump of black humanity, as if it were some little beast that might bite. Roma advised her to give it up and content

herself with kindness at a distance.

A few days after the day they failed to go to Charlmonte Hall, as intended, Roma, after consulting Wilmer about it, resolved to seek an interview with the new master. She had seen him about sunset, from her window, ride up between his two white guards. After supper the trio retired to their own apartments. With a beating heart Roma knocked at the door, which was unlocked and unbolted by one of the white men within. She stood in the doorway and looked in on the step-father sat with his face fronting her, his feet propped up on the table, a cob pipe in his mouth, a bottle and a glass before him. The three men stared at the girl, who stared back at them.

"I wish to speak to Mr. Hillyrrd," she said.

"I'm your man-fire away," was the reply, first taking a sup of brandy from the glass, after laying down his pipe.

"My mother is very ill, I wished to take her to Charlmonte

Hall—am I to understand that you intend to prevent it?"

"I intend to prevent my negroes from going off my land without my consent," he replied, with a defiant look in his eyes.
"Am I to understand then, that my mother will not be allow-

ed to use the carriage to drive out if she feels like it?"

"You are to understand that I do not allow my wife to visit my enemies—the men at Charlmonte Hall are my enemies."

"The men at Charlmonte Hall are our relations, if we cannot

use our own carriage, we can use theirs."

Roma turned to go.

"Not quite so fast, my girl. We had better understand one another. I claim no control over you-I shall attempt none. Your mother is my wife. I shall certainly see that she does not disobey my orders. She will not be allowed to use the carriage. of my enemies. She will not be allowed to go into the house of my enemies. If you do not like the rules of this house, you are free to leave it at any moment you please."

"My God!" exclaimed the girl, aghast, "Would you wish to separate me from Mamma? Do you wish to kill Mamma?"

"You must not try that game on me, my girl," said the man sneeringly, "you can't humbug me—you're only mad because you didn't turn out the grand heiress you expected to be. It's well known all over the country that you tried your level best to wheedle the old man into making a will in your favor and leave your mother out in the cold, eh? do you deny it? Very unfilial conduct I should say, very unnatural; so you see, my girl, there's no sort of use now, at this late day, for you to set yourself up as a model daughter, a devoted nurse and all that, not a bit, we understand all that you see, so—"

Roma stood a picture of petrified horror, disgust and despair, then she turned and fled as from a monster. Never before had it entered into her imagination that any creature in the shape of humanity could show so much malignancy. She resolved to appeal to her relations to come to rescue her mother from the control of a man whom she felt was as cruel and callous to all sense of honor as a wild beast. On the next day no opportunity presented itself, the servants were ordered not to leave the house. One of Hillyard's white guards was despatched to the city while Hillyard and the other man remained to guard the house as the terrified servants informed their young mistress. The front door was locked and barred and the two men sat in the back hall door. Wilmer's entrance and exit were not interfered with. Wilmer politely asked the new master if he expected to be besieged by dangerous foes, he was answered with an oath that he was expecting his wife's kin to make an attempt to abduct his wife and by G—d he meant to shoot the first man that interfered between him and his wife. She was his to hold and control and he'd give that man h-l who tried to rob him of his own. Thus it happened that the ladies of Ashcourt were prisoners in the house, Roma had leave to go, but Roma could not leave her mother and there was no legal way by which a wife could be rescued from her husband's control. In the midst of these harassments and anxieties the following advertisement, which appeared in several of the Charleston papers, greatly added to the distress of Roma and her relatives. The papers were kept from her mother.

GREAT AUCTION SALE OF STOCK AND NEGROES!

On the 1st. day of next October at my place Ashcourt, on Ashford Isle, I will sell to the highest bidder a number of fine milk cows, two yokes of oxen well broken and a young, fine saddle horse, six young mules and twenty-five likely negroes, field and house servants, sold for no fault but to meet the necessities of the owner.

B. F. HILLYARD.

[Savannah (Ga.) Trumpet and Mobile Courier copy and send bill to B. F. HILLYARD.]

Never before were a people so indignant as the Ashford Islanders, white and black. The negroes fell into wild consternation, they buzzed about in small gangs like angry bees blind with fright and rage. Hillyard and his white guards redoubled their vigilance, one or two of the ring leaders, or rather the loudest talkers, of the negroes, were seized and thrashed severely which had the effect of overawing the rest so that they returned to their

work in sullen silence, their hearts seething with rage.

No male visitor save the medical men were allowed to see Roma's mother. Roma was told that she might receive her friends provided she made no attempt to abduct her mother. In the midst of this commotion, one bright day, Calyx came to Ashcourt to see Roma; he had been on an extensive lecturing tour, had met with good success and saved enough to go on with his medical lectures in the winter when he expected to receive his diploma. Calyx gave a good account of the woman he had cured of Alcoholism, she had proved to be a splendid subject on which to operate mesmerically, he had left his sister and the subject in the city, they needed rest, he wished to find lodging for his party in some seaside cottage.
"Bring them to us," said Roma thinking that she would like

to have Ashcourt full of people, numbers would lessen her dread

of the usurper.

"Will they be allowed?" asked Wilmer approving of the plan

but fearing that the new master would object.

Roma was willing to run the risk. The new master's animosity seemed to be particularly aimed at the two Charlmontes and Mr. Ashford. She wished Calyx to try the effect of mesmerism on Mrs. Charlmonte, Calyx was very earnest in the belief that it would soothe, strengthen and restore her nervous system which was wofully shattered. If the usurper believed that he could benefit his wife's health Roma thought there would be no objection. The new master was gone to Richland for a few days, it was settled that the Calyx party should come that evening and get installed before his return. The guards were at the door but it was understood that any visitors might enter except the two Charlmontes and Mr. Ashford. As to Wilmer, if the truth must be told, in his secret heart he could not, could not help feeling an almost rapturous joy as well as profound sympathy because of the changed prospects of the girl he loved, she was no longer an heiress, there was not now the great barrier of wealth between them, true there was the image of a handsome, haughty, lounging, indolent gentleman which too often came to cause Wilmer anxiety but so strong was his belief that the handsome, haughty, indolent gentleman would cease his attentions when he knew of the girl's poverty that he felt confident on that score. Although Wilmer had not yet ventured to speak to Roma of his own hopes he was playing the pleasant part of a brother, giving brotherly advice, etc., and had ventured to remind her that she ought without delay candidly to inform her wooer that the fortune was

stricken from her; this she had done almost immediately after they had failed to find a will.

CHAPTER XXIV.

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THE SINGLETONS ARE GRIEVOUSLY DISAPPOINTED

Never was so handsome a gentleman more scurvily treated by that fickle jade, Misfortune, than Mr. Arthur Singleton. He succeeded in borrowing the few thousands from old McFlint and for a while fortune smiled and cards turned up trumps to such a good purpose that he was enabled to make a large payment on the note his sister held for money he had borrowed. With that insane confidence in luck common to gamblers he had no doubt but that he would go on winning until he retrieved his losses. For a short while he was in the gayest spirits, lucky at cards, almost as good as engaged to a great heiress, the world was filled with sunshine. But sunshine does not last all the time, clouds gathered up, the cards took a turn and became devilishly malignant toward him, he not only lost all that he had won but all that he had borrowed of old McFlint. Once bad luck set in it came in a flood, creditors swarmed up impatient, angry, insolent, never was an elegant gentleman more annoyed by vulgar tradesmen, boot makers, hatters, tailors, glovers, his landlady, each and all became persecuting enemies persistently dunning him for money; they pursued him with sleep-less malignity, followed him on the street, besieged him in his rooms until life became a burden. At length he sought refuge with his sister and hid himself in her back parlor where he lay on the sofa all day long smoking cigars, sipping brandy and water and going over in his mind the games by which he would certainly win if he only had money to start with again, his face, meanwhile, gloomy and abstracted. His sister endeavored to cheer him up by reminding him of the fair prospect ahead of settling himself on a fine Southern plantation, master of many slaves and a large income from sea-island cotton. She felt quite confident that the heiress would accept her brother after the first months of mourning were passed. The glowing widow Tubinger remained in blissful ignorance of the quasi engagement between the gentleman she admired and the elegant Island girl. Mrs. Singleton, from prudential motives had taken some pains to dissipate her suspicions in that direction and neglected no small chances that presented themselves of stimulating the widow's fancy for her brother by leading her to imagine that he greatly admired and esteemed the blooming widow herself. During Mr. Arthur's hiding term in his sister's apartments the widow was a frequent visitor, she was given to understand that Arthur had overworked himself, writing too continuously on his book and

that he was taking a rest under his sister's wing. Never had that gentleman showed so much fondness for the society of the widow, he welcomed her with a smile and begged her to return on the morrow, they had friendly little games of cards every night, the widow putting up her money with gay good humor and seemingly as well pleased to lose as to win. The stakes were small but small or large, lose or win, Mr. Arthur was eager for the excitement of play and eager for the society of the widow because it brought him that excitement. Mr. Sharpe was the accepted suitor of Miss Mopson and usually came with his aunt. Miss Mopson did not like cards, while the others played she sat contentedly looking on, perfectly satisfied to be in the same room with her lover even though he only gave her a word now and When the young lawyer wished to mingle sentiment with cards he would request his lady-love to sit on the sofa and sing to the guitar while he played; Miss Mopson accepted it as a great mark of appreciation, notwithstanding that her little warbles were interrupted very frequently by the ejaculations, instructions, comments and laughter of the players. Mr. Sharpe once privately told his lady-love that "cards were not proper for ladies, only men-ha! rough men should play cards," and ever after that Miss Mopson took secret pride and sweet satisfaction in the fact that she was never one of the party to play, she believed that her lover looked upon her as much too ethereal and angelic to engage in the amusement of cards.

"The female mind," her lover said, his bold black eyes bent on her tearful little orbs, "is much too—ha!—too soft, too pure

for cards—I hope you agree with me, Miss Melissa?"

Miss Mopson agreed.

A day or so afterward it happened that Mrs. Singleton had a headache, and declined taking a part in the game. Mr. Arthur called on his niece, Miss Melissa, who was sitting in an easy chair, her little hands idly folded in her lap, her little mind reveling in the rapturous belief that she was engaged to the most talented young gentleman on the face of the earth, as well as the handsomest. To his surprise and vexation Miss Melessa refused, and when asked for a reason, demurely replied, that in her opinion, cards were not proper things for ladies.

Her uncle and aunt looked at her curiously. Mrs. Tubinger

was amazed.

"Good gracious me!" she cried, "Not proper! Why, what on earth's got into M'liss. Do, Blacky, use your influence; we

must have a game."

The widow had discovered that cards always held Mr. Arthur in the room; no cards, and he soon wearied of the ladies' society, returned to his room, to read romances, or study the problems of chance. His sister would whisper to the widow that he was writing for dear life on his book.

Mrs. Singleton patiently awaited the expected letter from Roma, the reply to the eloquent and ardent appeal Mr. Arthur had

sent, begging the privilege of a visit to the Island. It came one day as Mr. Arthur was lying on the sofa, a novel in his hand, but his mind still at work on that problem of chance; he was in search of the clue which would lead to success. The letter was put in his hand, he lazily looked it over before opening it; a satisfied, confident smile on his lips. He felt sure that the girl had yielded and was ready to fall into his arms.

"Open it, Arthur," said the impatient sister.

Slowly he broke the seal, unfolded it and began to read; his sister's eyes were fixed upon him to read the character of the communication from the expression of his face. As he read a change came over that handsome face, the confident smirk died out, a cold, gray dullness stole in; his sister was alarmed.

"What on earth is the matter, Arthur? Is she dead?" she

asked, hoarse with a great dread.

"Dead? Yes!" he shouted, dashing the letter to the floor,

"Dead to me!—as dead as the deadest that ever died!"

He strode up and down the room, his brows contracted, his lips twitching.

Pale and trembling, his sister picked up the letter and read as

follows:

ASHCOURT, Sept. 18th.

Mr. Arthur Singleton:

Dear Sir:—Your letter came some time ago. I meant to reply that very day, to speak to Mama, and explain all that you have said, and show her your letters and ask permission to have you come to Ashcourt whenever you feel like visiting our part of the country. But, Alas! before that intention could be executed, indeed, almost the same moment it was formed, our household was plunged into such a sea of trouble as we never dreamed of. All of us are very unhappy, and are now in so miserable a situation that I have not yet ventured to speak to Mama on the subject you are so urgent for me to decide upon. Indeed, poor Mama is quite prostrated, and it requires all my time to attend to her—"

"What on earth does the girl mean?" muttered the reader, her own face growing whiter and whiter, as she read the ominous opening.

"O, go on, go on!" sneeringly replied the gentleman, "Go on

and see what devilish luck, always follows me."

Mrs. Singleton read on:

"This is the first moment that I have been able to snatch from waiting on Mama, and I devote it to explaining to you my long silence. Mama is more calm and resigned to-day, and we have some hope that she will rally and recover strength both of mind and body. But I must relate to you all that has befallen us since I last wrote you. Perhaps you may remember that I told you why Grandpapa was so anxious to see me before he left us forever, he wished to explain to me why he left me the Ashcourt estate instead of to Mama, who is his natural heir. Not because he loved me more than he did Mama—Oh! no; but because a long time ago, when I was only three years old, Mama married a second time. The man she married proved to be very bad, a gambler, and rough and brutal in his manners, although he was of a very good family. It seems that the law gives a wife's property immediately to her husband, and Grandpapa did not wish this bad man to have the power to gamble away his property

therefore he put the property legally in my hands with instructions how to dispose of it for Mama's benefit, that is, he told me this was the tenor of his will, but no will can be found, consequently Mama is the heir, or rather, he who claims to be her husband is the heir. He is here now, in control of everything. He behaves very badly toward Mama, refusing to let her have the carriage to visit her uncle's. He declares that he intends to convert everything into money and leave the Island, and has begun to put his plan into execution, as you will see from the enclosed advertisement, cut from a city paper. Thus you will see what trouble and grief we have, and excuse me if I do not write more satisfactory letters. I do not think a visit to us at this time would be pleasant for you, we are all too unhappy at the prospect of that dreadful auction.

Mama is awake and wants me. With best love to your sister, I remain, Yours truly.

Yours truly, Roma Charlmonte.

For a moment Mrs. Singleton was speechless, the scheme she had built up so laboriously, was tumbled down like a house of cards. The letter dropped to the floor. She cast her eyes down, it lay beside the printed slip that had been enclosed. the advertisement of the great auction sale. Singleton saw the name, "Hillyard," and broke out in fresh repinings.

"Hillyard! By God!" he cried. "A regular blackleg! I know the fellow—he cheats at cards! I met him in Europe, a noted gambler. What luck he has! while I'm driven like a damned dog by a set of infernal harpies who track me night and day with their infernal duns!"

Even while her brother was raging, the ready mind of his sister was busy with other schemes. She fell back on the widow, determined to push matters in that direction.

"The first thing to be done, Arthur," she said, with recovered hope, "is to write a decent letter of condolence to the girl, full of sympathy, and all that, but you must let her know that everything is ended between you and her."

Mr. Arthur swore he would do no such thing, he had been bothered enough with the girl, he never wanted to hear from her again.

His sister argued that it was the best way to get rid of her forever; the girl being now penniless and by no means pretty, might choose to hold him to an engagement, her relations might wish to dispose of her in that way. It was best to write a firm, quiet, decided, friendly note, and let her know, once for all, that the matter is ended.

"But it is an infernal thing to do, and I don't see the use of it; a man never likes to own up in so many words that he was after a woman's money."

"You need not own any such thing; wait, I'll write and you

shall copy. The short, but significant letter was written and dispatched on its way. Half an hour later another violet scented little epistle was sent from the Singleton house, this last was to her dearest friend, the dear Amelia, which ran as follows:

Dear Amelia:—Do come over this evening; poor Arthur is feeling quite poorly and no one brightens him up as you do. What a blessing is your happy buoyancy of feeling! So fresh, so girlish! For my part, I know I am enough to mope poor Arthur to death. Don't fail, I shall look for you, and so does my patient. Yours lovingly,

CATHARINE SINGLETON.

CHAPTER XXV.

WHICH THE READER MAY SKIP IF HE DOES NOT LIKE OUR YOUNG PEOPLE'S VAGARIES.

As Wilmer and Charlmonte had hoped, the presence of the Calyx party in Ashcourt served to break the dull monotony of Roma's life. It was a queer party, the theorizing, dreaming Calyx, the little, mild, say-nothing Keziah, the born lady who, to use her own phraseology, had been "born again" into a new life; she was indeed revolutionized, made over as it seemed morally and physically, religion was now the dominating power of her character, had she been a Catholic she would have gone into a convent and knelt on stones half the night, worn hair shirts and walked with peas in her shoes, had she been a man and Protestant in faith she would have become an evangelical revivalist, as it was she became a sort of lay missionary, leading female prayer meetings and class meetings, visiting the sick, singing, praying and exhorting to repentance. Never had she found so fair a field for her labor as she found on the Island. tional negroes it gave her intense and fervent satisfaction to labor with. She felt a fervid and rapturous delight when she succeeded in working a negro audience up to the pitch of shouting, screaming and praying loudly for the "mercy of de Lord." She became an immense favorite with the negroes of Ashcourt, visiting them in their cabins when they were sick, sitting by their bed sides, reading the Bible and praying with intense fervor. The little, kind Keziah preferred to sit with Mrs. Charlmonte and read to her the sermons they both thought it their duty to like.

Charlmonte was prevented from visiting Ashcourt but it often happened that he saw his cousin on the beach. There were benches under the shade of the live oak trees on which the young people would sit and discuss matters, moral, political and religious. When Roma's mother was well enough to permit her to get the fresh air Roma would resort to that favorite spot beneath the green boughs of the water oaks, the wide sea spread out in the distance, she, Wilmer and Calyx, would give their opinions on the affairs of this troubled and misguided world with all the rash confidence of youth and inexperience. On one occasion Charlmonte, filled with patriotic fervor, broke out in eloquent praises of his country—its vast teritory, its power, the freedom of its people, etc., then he lauded the founders of our government, the noble old rebels who staked their lives and sacred honor on the chances of gaining freedom from British pow-

er. This brought Roma out, she said it was all very well to give the founders of this government their just dues, they had done a commendable work in their day and age, but it would be far wiser if the men of America would stop singing peans of praises to our forefathers long enough to begin seriously to consider what they had left undone that they should have done."

"What they left undone?" repeated Charlmonte in a tone and with a look as if Roma had uttered high treason against the mem-

ory of the noble dead.

"Yes," replied Roma, "you must admit Ed, that they only half way established freedom in this country."

"Only half way?"

"Well perhaps I should say only one-quarter way."

"I do not see your drift."

"Can you say a people are free when one-half of the people are held in absolute subjection to the other half? Look at Mama, would you consider yourself free if you were in Mama's position? if the law stepped in and put you absolutely in the power of another as the law puts Mama? if it took your property out of your hands and gave it to another? Is that freedom?"

"Surely you will admit that this is the best government in the

world."

"Of course I admit that, but what does that prove except that other governments are worse than this? When the Romans conquered Britain and when the British rebelled against Roman power they rebelled against the best government there was on the face of the earth. The British founded a better. When the Colonies rebelled against England they rebelled against the best government on the face of the earth, but the Colonies founded a better—not vastly better but somewhat better."

"Come now, Roma, you are not just, there is a very vast difference between the freedom of Americans and the freedom of En-

glishmen."

"Yes, American men are freer than English men, but American women are no freer than English women, the women of both America and England, legally and politically, are as much slaves as the negroes of this country."

"I think," said Wilmer, "that Americans have set out

wrong."

"In what respect?" asked Charlmonte.

"We start out with the idea that our government is not only the best and freest in the world—that much is correct, but we also hold that it is already perfect, that it needs no improvement, we make it our idol and fall down and worship it. On every fourth of July we hold a grand saturnalia of idolatrous worship, we howl, we scream, we spread out our arms and throw up our hats and drink much bad whisky in idiotic patriotic tomfoolery. Now all that sort of bosh only blinds the people and fits them to become unreasoning worshipers at the feet of Power and Place. They worship Government and think it highly patriotic

they never stop to consider that government is nothing but the human agencies which move its machinery. When the French king said "I am the State" he described it exactly. What is our State but the men in power? the President, the Senators, the Congressmen, the heads of the army, the judiciary, etc. Strike all these into nothingness and we have left only a collection of families. When people are sufficiently civilized they will need no government, all the expensive paraphernalia of government we owe to our own ignorance and vice. When justice becomes the god of the people we will need no president, no policemen, no congress, no law. Behind the thing we call the State if we look, we will see the puppets that pull the wires, these puppets are only men, always imperfect, often selfish, often vicious, men whose strongest desire is to perpetuate and increase the power they hold. At the bidding of these men we march to battle fields, up to cannon's mouths, we kill and are killed by the millions, all the time asses enough to fancy we are serving the State. We only serve the men who run the State. We fall down at the feet of these men and adulate the power they exercise under the name of government. We bray out after this fashion:

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE'S PRAYER TO THE GOVERNMENT.

Oh! thou great and perfect creature! we admire and adore thy benificence. No other government on the face of the earth can equal thee. We prostrate our reason in the dust at thy sacred shrine. Thou art so grand, so beautiful, so powerful, so good, with one accord we unite to decry, deride, denounce and punish that man who dares to differ from this opinion. Should he resist thy power, we will brand him as rebel and traitor, we will cover his name with infamy and shoot or hang him. On the contrary the man who shouts thy praises, who seeks to enlarge and strengthen thy power, to give it eternal permanence we will hold as wise and great and worthy of thy highest places and largest salaries."

"In the name of common sense what are you talking of-what

is your drift?" asked Charlmonte.

"Do you not see in effect that is the way we Americans adulate that imperfect thing we call Government?"

"Imperfect or not I do not see how you could better it."

"Ah! if I only had the power."

"What would you do?"

"In the first place I would do away with the idea of permanency. I would have the people educated in the idea that a progressive people outgrow their forms of government just as they outgrow any other custom or fashion of their ancestors, just as they outgrow their methods of dressing, of thinking, of making roads, of writing books, etc. Suppose the people of the seventeenth century claimed to dictate to the people of the eigh-

teenth, the nineteenth, the twentieth and so on, for ten or a dozen centuries, to establish the fashions of our garments, to doom us to wear what they had worn, to read the same books they had read, write in the same style they wrote, build the same sort of houses they built, make the same sort of bridges and boats they made, use the same sort of machinery, eat the same food and take the same medicine, do you not see that such a state of affairs would stop the wheels of progress, would keep us at a dead stand still? Governments grow up from the mentality of a people, is it wise for the superior mentality of the eighteenth century blindly to accept any work of the mentality of the preceding centuries? We would not, we do not accept their mentality in any other form than that of government and religion, and governments and religions are always opposed to progress, always endeavor to hold the people back, to tether them to the past instead of pushing them forward in broader fields of freedom. All political freedom is gained in spite of governments, not by their aid; all religious freedom has been gained in spite of the churches, not by their aid. The governments call those who are dissatisfied, who strike for larger political freedom, rebels; the churches call those who are dissatisfied and who strive for larger religious freedom, heretics. The men who run the governments and the men who run the churches brand rebels and heretics with a brand of infamy yet they are the best of the race, they have done the best service for humanity."

"You are not practical, Wilmer, you do not make one practical suggestion. It is easy enough to find fault, not so easy to

mend the faults."

"What do you look upon, Mr. Wilmer," asked Roma, "as the

most glaring defect of our government?"

"It is all defective inasmuch as it is too close an imitation of the government of England which we shed so much blood to get rid of."

"You are dreaming, Wilmer," cried Charlmonte, "I see no imitation whatever; we got rid of a monarchy, we have a democracy; we got rid of an aristocracy, we have equality; we got rid of a king, we have a president."

"Let us be exact, Charlmonte, let us look closely at facts, your statement is only partially true. The word democracy means a government by the people and for the people—the whole people,

not a privileged part, does it not?"

"Certainly."

"Then America is only a degree or so more democratic than Britain. England is partially democratic, so is America, we go a little further than England that is all. We have millions of people in America with not one particle more freedom than many millions of the British possess. We have not a monarchy or an oligarchy but a sexarchy—that is, a partial sexarchy which runs the government. If democracy means a government of the whole people you must admit that we can lay no claim to the

name when less than half of the people may take part in the government."

"Less than half? I do not see it," said Charlmonte.

"It is as plain as A B C, half of the people of this country are women, they are held in a more degrading subjection than our forefathers were to the British government; then we have a few millions of blacks in the same condition. Yes, our forefathers made an advance toward freedom but they went only a few steps they too closely imitated the government they had been educated to look upon as the best on the earth. Our president is in the place of the monarch they abandoned; a president is something better than a king inasmuch as his term is limited, his office elective and his pay less than a king's. Our Senate stands in the place of the House of Lords but is an improvement on the House of Lords, inasmuch as Senators are elected and their office limited. Although our president's salary is small when compared with a king's it is enormous when compared with a hard working artisan's or mechanic's; this is contrary to the theory of equality on which our government is founded. As long as honest men work hard from day dawn until dark for one or two dollars a day we have no right to pay any man \$25,000 per annum which is \$168 per day for the easiest, pleasantest and most honorable work a man can do. Nor should the general of an army receive so much more honor, respect and money than a private, if the private does his duty he deserves as much recognition as the of-This vast difference we make is simply a part of the spirit of monarchy yet left in us. The theory of our government is that all men are political equals, that our officials, from the highest to the lowest, are our servants. The kingly theory is that some men are born to rule and others born to obey, that the officers in power, from the highest to the lowest, are superior to the people. We are the descendants of Englishmen trained in that false idea that military and civil officers deserve great homage from the people, we have not yet divested ourselves of that idea, we naturally fall at the feet of the man in power although we ourselves put him there, the moment he is in power we begin to adulate, we take off our hats and shout if we see him pass by, we gather in crowds to stare at him as if he were more than mortal, in short we make of ourselves the most consummate asses on the face of the earth, we make pretense of believing a thing we do not believe."

Before Charlmonte could reply to this a shower drove the par-

ty to the house.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DOLLY SUGGESTS A WAY TO SETTLE THE USURPER.

One morning Thetty ran into her young mistress' room, her eyes wide open with astonishment, to announce"Dar was a pusson wanted to see Miss Roma."

Roma looked up apprehensively, she had given Thetty strict instructions to let no one intrude—fears of the new master ever haunted her mind, fear that he would push himself into her mother's room. Thetty saw and understood the look of dread in her young mistress' face.

"No, no, Miss Roma," she said, "it ain't him. You so pintedly 'structs me for to let nary soul come in, fo' I tells you who 'tis, so I wouldn' let her in, which makes her most awful mad,

it do."

"Who is it, Thetty?"

A broad grin broke over Thet's black face.

"Laws, Miss Roma, hit ain't nobody 'ceptin' ole Dolly Charmon! Old Dolly's done come home from de Norf."

"Bring her in, Thetty."

Thetty departed, and almost instantly returned with our old friend Dolly, her head adorned with the gayest and tallest of turbans, her dress clean and neat, her face at first frowning and glowering, became radiant and joyous at the sight of the young girl whom she clasped in her arms and squeezed with rapturous force.

"Lor'! Lor'! honey!" she cried, after releasing Roma and stepping back a pace or two, the better to gaze upon her face and form. "Lor'! Lor'! honey! I's dat glad to see you agin,

I is dat—sho!"

"When did you arrive, Dolly?" asked Miss Charlmonte.

"Jes dis blessed minute, honey—jes dis blessed—"

A swift change came over the black face, a wondering, amazed, dazed astonishment. Her little, beady eyes were fixed and staring upon the lady called Madame Thebidoux, and who Dolly had called the "bawn lady" when she found her in prison. That lady, fair, serene, calm as a May morning, sat by the window, engaged in some sort of needle work. Madame Thebidoux was not fond of reading or of conversation; she would not read for pleasure, on the contrary, she always selected sermons, or other religious works, and read as a matter of duty. Consequently she did not read much, and when in the house busied herself with a needle.

"Lor'! Lor'!" muttered Dolly, her mind reverting to that prison scene, to the appearance of the born lady then, and her appearance now. "Lor'! Lor'! ef dis don't beat my time! hit do!"

The born lady lifted her calm eyes and recognized the negress with undisturbed serenity.

"What is it, Dolly? What beats your time?" asked Miss

Charlmonte.

"I am glad to see you, Dolly, I hope you are well," said the born lady, offering her hand in a friendly, unembarassed way, which had the effect of recalling Dolly's presence of mind.

She saw the course she ought to take and took it. She greet-

ed the born lady with effusive gladness.

"Lor'! Lor'! Is dis you? Sho nuff you, an' nobody else? Well, well, ef hit aint ernuff to set de wus sinner in de wul a shoutin' 'Glory hallujah! Glory hallujah!"

The refrain was sung out with fervid enthusiasm. Dolly, standing off at some little distance, clapped her hands with

fervor.

"So you have found an old friend in the lady," said Miss

Charlmonte.

"Lor"! Miss Roma." said the negress, turning to the girl with a serious face, "I knowed of her afoah she was dis high (holding her hand about four feet from the floor). She was on'y a little chunk of a gal when I went to lib wid her ma. Don't you 'member, Miss Roma," continued the negress, seating herself on a stool directly in front of Miss Charlmonte, planting her elbows on her knees, propping her face up in her two hands, with her head craned forward and her countenance solemnly earnest. "Don't you 'member a hearin' o' dat summer I went 'way from de Islan' to de White Suffer Springs, in ole Virginny? You was a little gal den, 'bout so high, Miss Roma (indicating the height from the floor by a gesture of her black hand). Yes, you was a little slip of a gal den, nigh 'bout 'leven or twelve years ole, Miss Roma, an' Miss——' Here Dolly looked hesitatingly at the born lady, doubtful whether she ought to speak her name out or not.

"Blaine," suggested the lady indicated, coming to her relief, with great serenity. "Blaine was my name at that time. I am

called Madame Thebidoux now."

"Miss Silla Blaine, Lors, honey! I knows yo name same as I knows Miss Roma's. An' Miss Silla's pa was monsus rich den, wid his kerrige an' fine hosses, at de White Suffer Springs, and dars whar I get 'quainted wid 'em, an' dey up an' ax me to go wid 'em home, to wait on Miss Silla an' de chilluns in New Yok, an' I went 'long wid 'em, an' lib wid 'em nigh 'bout two year; an' dat's how I come to know Miss Silla dar, an' I's so monsus glad to see her now—I is dat, sho!—'pearin' so monsus well an' scrimptous, same as in dem good ole times when I usent to comb her har when she rid out in her pa's kerrige."

"I'm sure, Dolly," replied Miss Charlmonte kindly, "we are both glad to see you, and I hope you are glad to get back among

your own people after your travels."

"Miss Roma," said the negress, with an air of solemn seriousness, craning her head out toward the young lady, her little eyes fixed earnestly upon her, with an air of imparting information of the deepest moment, "Miss Roma, dar aint no place like dis yer Islan' home. Dem dar Yankee towns 'll do to stop at an' look at a day or two, but dey aint de sort ob place for to lib in all de time. By no manner ob means, dey aint. Sech a lot o' po' white trash as libs in dem Yankee towns, Miss Roma, you neber seed in all yo' bawn days in dis part o' de country, an' dat's what goes agin de grain o' fust-quality white ladies wid dark-

complected skins, sech as suvans o' dis Islan' is. Hit do, Miss

Roma, hit do."

This emphatic and repeated assertion was called forth by the half smile she saw in the young girl's face, which she construed

as indicating incredulity.

Considering that Dolly had spent five or six years in a Northern city, only indulging in occasional visits to her Island home, it was not surprising if the story of rasped feelings was received with a few grains of skepticism.

"Then, Dolly," said the girl, "we hope that you have come back to stay, you won't return to those po'-white-trash cities

again?"

"My presen' intention, Miss Roma," returned the negress, still with the air of imparting the most momentous information, "is ter get Mas Ed'rd for ter build me a comf'able little cabin in de fur corner ob de peach ochid, an' dar I means to settle down till old Master call me to de mansion in de skies, what He prepars for dem dat seek de salvation ob de Lord, and 'beys his wud on de earf, an' raise chickens an eggs, an' sell 'em to de gret-us."

"Gret us" being negro contraction of great house, the appella-

tion bestowed by the blacks on their master's mansion.

Miss Charlmonte expressed approval of this plan and wanted

to know what "Mas Ed'rd" said to it.

"Lor' bless you, honey," cried Dolly, breaking into a jubilant grin, "I aint laid eyes on none on 'em yet; nary ole Mas Ed'rd or young Mas Ed'rd hab I sot eyes on yet. You see, honey, I's jes dis blessed minute landed on dis blessed Islan' offen de boat, an' aint been nigh Charmon' Hall yet."

"And you haven't had any talk with the Charlmonte or Ash-

court people?"

"Nary soul is I seed, ceptin' dat ar imperent Thet, which when I lef' de Islan' warn't no more'n trundle-bed trash, an' now yer she comes 'long as stuck up as you please, 'fusin' me—'fusin' to let me come up to Miss Roma's room, 'dout she comes up first a 'nouncin' me, which I telled her for her sass, she was a imperent huzzy, which I had a great mine for to turn ober my knee and gib a good spankin'—Dolly don't need no 'nouncin' to nobody on dis yer Islan'.''

While delivering this, Dolly's little viperish eyes darted flames at the offending Thet, who clutched her mouth with one hand to check the unruly giggles that bubbled out at the sight of

Dolly's indignation.

Miss Charlmonte replied that she was always glad to see Dolly and Dolly could always come straight up to her room, but that Thetty was not altogether to blame, having had instructions to let no one in without first announcing the name.

"Mama is so sick, Dolly, and we have had so much trouble of

late, we must keep things as quiet as possible," said Roma.

"I knowed it wasn't you, Miss Roma," returned the negress,

her feelings not yet mollified toward the "trundle-bed trash," that went by the name of the illustrious mother of the brave Greek. "I knowed well 'nuff it was nuffin but the imperence o' dat good-fur-nothin' Thet."

'Ah!'' replied the the girl, sadly, we must not be too hard on poor Thet. She will have trouble enough before she is much

older."

"What trouble's Thet gwine to hab, Miss Roma?" asked the negress, with interest.

"You have not yet heard of the great trouble that has come to

Ashcourt?"

"I's heerd o' ole Mas Harry's bein took home; but, Miss Roma, Mas Henry he was ready to go when de good Lord call him. Mas Henry he made his peace wid de Lord same time I comed frew, an' jine de church; me an' Mas Henry bofe b'longed to de same church. Mas Henry's gone home to glory, Miss Roma. Hit aint fitten fur Christians to mummah at de good Lord's work."

Seeing that Dolly knew nothing of the other great calamity that had come to Ashcourt, Roma briefly stated the case. When she spoke of the danger the negroes were in of being sold and scattered over the earth, the girl's tears flowed, and the sympathetic negresss wept with her. When the recital was finished, and the white and the black faces were wiped of the tears that wet them, the negress seemed to sink into a deep and profound cogitation; her turbaned head wagged from side to side, and her little beady eyes took on a singular look. After a minute or two of deep thinking, the head ceased wagging, and craned itself out nearer and nearer to the pale face of the young girl.

"Miss Roma," she began, in a whisper, with an air of mysterious solemnity, "dat ar' man's too oudacious to be 'lowed to live and breave on dis yer yarf. He aint fitten for dis yer wul. Mawk my wuds, Miss Roma (slowly, and with imposing solemnity, shaking her turbaned head from side to side, her little eyes burning upon the girl), mawk my wuds, dat ar' man aint fitten to live. He aint no more business a livin' on dis yer yerf dan a

wild bar, or a wild painter (panther)—he aint dat !''

Then, after a pause of profound reflection, her little, viperish eyes all the time fixed intently upon the girl, who listened patiently. Dolly resumed, her voice sunk to a still lower whis-

per.

"Miss Roma, you jes speak de wud, an' dis niggah 'll settle dat ar' oudacious man's hash in mons'us quick time—mine me! she will!—gympsom seed 'll do it,' she added with an air of deep satisfaction that so convenient a substance presented itself—that poisonous weed growing abundantly in the corners of the fences. "Jes drap a han'ful o' gympsom in his soup—it'll settle him. Rat pizen 'll do it—drap a pinch in de coffee pot. Miss Roma, dat man's a sufferin for a pinch o' rat pizen—he is dat—bad!"

The girl's mind was slow to take in the meaning of the negress' proposition. So absorbed with her own griefs, so little looking for anything of a serious nature from Dolly, she only listened with a half-attention and wandering thoughts, and, even after she really understood Dolly's proposition, it did not arouse the horror and distrust that she would have felt had a white person made it. She had such faith in Dolly's kindness of heart, and was so tolerant of her eccentricities, that she hardly looked upon her as amenable to the same lines and laws that regulated other lives and other thoughts. Nevertheless, though not feeling that the negress was really capable of so wicked a deed, the girl set herself very earnestly to work to do away with such ideas.

"No, no, Dolly," she said, "that will never do—never! That would be an awful, awful crime. Do you not remember that the good book says, 'thou shalt not kill'?''
''I 'members, Miss Roma, I 'members; but dat ar' man—

Miss Roma, he's a sufferin' fur a little pinch o' rat pizen, sho'."

Roma became more earnest in her arguments.

"Do you not know, Dolly, that if the good God wanted this bad man killed he would do it himself?"

"I knows dat, honey, I knows dat; but dis yer oudacious man,

Miss Roma, he aint fitten to live."

"He must live, Dolly, until God himself sees fit to end his It would be highly presumptuous in us, as well as awfully wicked, to interfere with the Creator's laws. You see that,

don't you, Dolly ?"

"Miss Roma," replied the negress, after a moment of sage reflection over the moral problem thus presented to her mind, "hit do seem sorter dat way, I mus' perfess; yet, somehow or nuver, Miss Roma, my mine 'pears to see dat dat man's a sufferin' fur a little pinch o' rat pizen in his coffee, or a little han'ful o' gympsom seed biled up in his soup, which would gib him ease o' de debil dat's in him, what sets him on to such oudacious meanness, which, Miss Roma, you can't help seein' fur yo'sef, would be a mons'us good fur all dese Ashcote niggahs, fur to git him outen de way. Dey don't want to be druv from der homes an' der fokes, Miss Roma, an' dat man, he's got no business a druvin' of 'em, he aint none o' deir master. Hit do seem sorter bofe ways, Miss Roma."

Dolly added this last by way of an amiable concession to the

white girl's judgment.

"I perfess hit do seem sorter bofe ways."

"Oh! Dolly, Dolly!" cried the girl, growing desperately in earnest, when she found the negress so fixed in her idea of the right and justice of putting the enemy out of the way by poison. "You must not think that! You must not talk that! not know how wicked, how dreadfully wicked it is! the lady (turning to the 'born lady'). She is a good, pious lady. hear what she will say about it."

Then the girl explained to Madame Thebideaux how the case stood, and what Dolly had advised, and begged her to speak to Dolly on the subject.

The born lady dropped her needle work and took up the subject, treating it altogether from a religious standpoint. She told Dolly that it was the devil tempting her. It was the devil that put such thoughts into her head, the devil who was striving to lead her soul to eternal torment.

"Oh!" cried the born lady, clasping her hands with fervent earnestness, "Oh! Dolly, Dolly! it is the devil himself that puts such thoughts in your heart. He wants to drag you down to the flames of Hell! I know—Oh! I know how he tempts weak sinners. Since I left you, Dolly, that night on the street, my sins have been washed away—washed white in the blood of the Lamb! O, the unspeakable happiness of serving the Lord! Oh! the rapture of doing his will! I have trampled Satan under my feet! I have put my hand to the plow-share and will never turn back! Beware! beware of the evil spirit seeking the ruin of your soul!"

All this and much more, poured out with great fervor, deeply impressed the negress. She thought it very fine. The tears trickled down her black cheeks. Her whole soul warmed up with religious ecstacy.

"Bless de Lord!" she cried, "Bless de good Lord! Oh! Miss Silla! (graspin the born lady's hand with affectionate fervor) Oh! Miss Silla! I's dot 'ejoiced you's comed frough! I neber knowed you got 'ligion fo' dis blessed minute. Bless de Lord for his mussies! (shaking the 'born lady's' hand with great force) He am fetch you from triberlation and from trials! He am wash you clean in de blood ob de Lamb! Glory to God! I feels like shoutin', Miss Silla! I's mose as happy as ef I'd got 'ligion ober again, which dar aint no use o' doin', becaze when sinnahs git de puah, reveren', sho'-nuff, hit's gwine ter las' 'em plum till dey lan's safe an' soun' in ole Mas Ab'am's buzzum.'

This happy diversion of Dolly's feelings pretty effectually banished her lawless ideas with regard to the use of "rat pizen" and "gympsom-seed soup."

Shortly afterward Dolly took her departure in a comfortable frame of mind, announcing her intention of going to Richland "an' gettin' a good look at dat ar' oudacious, po', low-down white man what had the imperence to come a settin' hisse'f up as de master o' dese Ashcote fokes—he as wasn' fitten ter tie ole Mas Henry's shoes, dat he wasn'!"

As she strolled through the lawn on her way to Charlmonte Hall, to interview her old and young masters, father and son, she lifted up her voice and poured out her soul in fervid song,

her religious feelings finding expression in that good hymn:

"Hawk!* from de tomb a do'ful soun', My eahs atten' de cry; Come, all you niggahs, view de groun' Whar you will shawtly lie!"

And so on, through all the veres until she met an old acquaintance, whom she greeted with effusive joy and engaged in a newsy, gossiping chat.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE NEGRO AUCTION COMES OFF .- THE ASHCOURT NEGROES IN DEEP TRIBULATION.

The auction sale was to take place on the Ashcourt lawn. A beautiful spot was selected, a plank platform made for the auctioneer to stand upon while crying off his chattels. Plank benders were set in rows in front of the platform, which arrangement was bitterly resented by the negroes as savoring of a sacrilegious

"Fur all de wul," said Mammy Rose, eyeing the platform and benders with pious indignation, "for all de wul, hit's jes like a preachin' place; dat stan' dar fur de preacher, an' dem benches fur de congregation to set on; It'll bring down a judgment on dat man, you see if it don't."

"Ole Satan, de preacher, 'll preach on dat stan'," replied Tallyrand, with a gloomy brow, his broad, brown face had lost all of its old-time gaiety. "An' hit 'pears like, Rose," he continued, reflectively, "hit do 'pear like de een o' de wul is nigh at han', an' de judgment day is mos yer—hit do 'pear dat way to my mine."

There had indeed been a fearful agitation going on in the African mind since the advent of the new master, and especially since the auction sale of negroes had been advertised. The question that kept them on the rack of anxiety was, which among them would be sold. The advertisement said "Twenty-five in number," but whether that twenty-five would be men or women, field or house people, no one knew. It had come to be generally believed that Tallyrand would certainly be one of the fated twenty-five.

"He'll be sho to jek you up, Tally," said Mammy Rose, "he's jes' dat mean an' spiteful; he'il jek you up jes' becaze ole Mas Henry wouldn't let him sell you fifteen year ago, you jes see ef

he don't."

At an early hour on the day of the sale quite a shoal of boats came over from the mainland, bringing rather a rough crowd to

^{*} Hark.

the auction. Negro traders from far and near came to the sale. Not a planter was among them. Those proud old planters of the South persistently avoided the sight of anything disagreeable connected with the institution of slavery. They would not look upon any but its best and pleasantest features. They saw that numbers of negroes lived under masters who liked and kindly treated their slaves, they endeavored to persuade their slaves that it very, very seldom happened that negroes were ill treated unhappy by their condition. All the and kindness and comfort they were willing to see and boast of, and, with wondrous unanimity, every planter pretended to believe that slaves were the happiest people on the earth. Nothing could induce a planter to look on the other side of the institution. They would not open their eyes to the fact that it often happened that slave families were torn asunder, and slave hearts were wrung with sorrow; they would not consider the fact that the very worst of men often became the masters of slaves and might delight in tormenting.

Shall we so severely condemn this one-sidedness of the planters? Do we not all act the same way, even yet? We look around and see great numbers of women living as queens, in luxurious homes, with fathers or husbands, whose every energy of mind and body is exerted in their service, and we pretend to think the condition of all almost as fair and flowery. We take no account of the thousands and thousands of women who have no husbands, or fathers to furnish them with good homes; or the housands and thousands having husbands who are a hundred times wose off than with none. In the discussion of the question of the hardships resulting from the subjection of women, nine men out of ten believe, or affect to believe, that women are happy enough in their subjection, just as the old planters of the South believed, or affected to believe, that negroes were per-

fectly happy in slavery.

On the day of the great auction in Charlmonte lawn, the negroes were too anxious and unhappy to keep at work; they crowded up to the house and called for their young mistress. Roma was painfully affected. She went out to them, her face stained with tears. She told them she was powerless to help them, that she, as well as they, were slaves, and helpless to re-

sist the power that oppressed.

It was in such emergencies that the "born lady" came forward with flying colors. She exhorted them with great fervor to put their trust in the Lord. He would sustain, he would lead them through the valley and shadow of death, he had said every hair of their heads was numbered, he permitted this great trial for their own good, perhaps to work out their eternal salvation, etc., etc., until she got them worked up to such a high pitch of religious excitement, they marched out to the auction stand singing hymns in a loud voice and with great fervor.

Wilmer was not on the Island, he had been called home to his

mother, who was ill. Charlmonte shut himself up in Charl-

monte Hall with his father.

"If I were to go to Ashcourt," he said to his father, who suggested that he ought to go to sustain Roma and her mother under the cruel trial, "I might do or say something to that man—I would like to throttle him. Besides, Roma and Constance intend to shut themselves in with Aunt Caroline."

Calyx, who was intent on observing every phase of slavery,

announced his determination to witness the sale.

Daddy Dick, Tallyrand's father, who felt great uneasiness, eaused by the fear that Tallyrand would be among the fated twenty-five, was one of the first on the spot. His granddaughter, Thetty, brought him a chair, and he sat under a tree, a little to one side, but in full view of the stand. The old man looked as if he were in the low deeps of melancholy, in all his long life, he had never before witnessed a scene like this. He shook his old head and groaned aloud, and coincided with his son Tally's opinion, that it "peared like de een o' de wul was nigh at han"."

Hillyard was in a painful stress; for some time past he had suffered sleepless anxiety—he felt that he was in the midst of enemies, who hated and despised him, enemies who would look upon his death as the best boon that could befall them. The glowering faces of the blacks, their scowling glances as they passed him by, their slow and unwilling obedience, filled him with dread. For two weeks he had never stepped out without the attendance of the two white guards, rough sailors, armed to the teeth, who walked and rode by his side wherever he went, and slept at his door. This arrangement greatly intensified the scorn and contempt already aroused in the breasts of the blacks.

When the negro traders from the city arrived they gathered in a group around Hillyard and his two guards to discuss the best way to seize the twenty-five negroes wanted for the auction. Hillyard had to make the humiliating confession that he had, thus far, hesitated to get up the gang of negroes he meant to sell.

"The damned niggers," he said, "were in such a state of sulk,

I had to put it off to the last minute.

"You think they'll cut up a row, eh?" asked one trader,

squirting tobacco juice from his tobacco-stained lips.

"Row? Who the devil cares for a nigger row?" cried another trader. "One white man—the half of a white man, who can't squelch a nigger row with a cow-hide whip ought to pull off his pants, put on a flannel petticoat and set in the chimney corner for the rest of his days. Come on, Hillyard, I'm not afeerd of niggers. I'll bet you my bottom dollar I'll get up your gang in half an hour, and they won't squeak, either—just show me your men, point 'em out. I know how to manage niggers."

The auctioneer was instructed to open the ball with the cattle. While the people were making bids for horses and cows, Hillward, his two guards, and the half dozen negro traders, were to

get up the negroes to be sold. They went to the house, into the dining room, Damon brought hot coffee and a bottle of brandy; the men drew up around a small table, drank coffee laced with

brandy, and talked in low tones.

Damon waited and watched with a gloomy brow. Thetty hovered around the door, anxiously questioning Damon about the dreadful men, when he came out for hot water, or more coffee, not that these petted servitors had any fears on their own account, they felt safe in the idea that "Miss Calline and Miss Roma wouldn' 'low them to be toched." Thetty feared on her father's account, it had been generally conceded by the whole black population that Tallyrand would be among those put up for sale.

The traders, with an eye to business, had critically observed

Damon.

"That's a likely fellow," said one, pouring into his second cup of coffee a few spoonfuls of brandy. "He's a fine waiter at table.

-will you put him up, Hillyard?"

"If you'll give me a good bid on him. Damned if I care which goes up, so I get the money, though there'll be a devil of a row if we take these high and mighty house servants. They'd as well get used to it, for they'll all go before I get through with them. I don't like this hum-drum life on a plantation, the city is more to my notion. I'd die of the dolefuls here in a year."

"Put him up, I'll give you a good bid on him," said the tra-

der.

"How'd you like a likely house-maid? They're a pair of lovers—sell one, sell t'other," said Hillyard.

"Trot her in-let's have a look at her," returned the trader,

warmed up by the coffee and brandy.

Damon here came in with a pitcher of hot water. Hillyard ordered him to send Thetty, to take out the coffee cups—they were going to make a bowl of punch. Thetty obeyed, curious to get a sight of the dreadful men, yet sullen and resentful at having to wait upon such "low-down trash."

"Will she suit?" arked Hillyard, when Thetty and Damon

had retreated with the cups.

The trader thought he'd risk her, he knew a party who'd give

a fair price for a good chambermaid.

"We'll have a h——l of a time getting them to the auction block," said Hillyard, an anxious frown contracting his brows. "You'll all have to lend a hand. You see, these d——d blacks haven't yet got it into their thick skulls that I am their master. I'll settle that point with 'em to-day, I reckon; when I get a few thousands in my pocket from the sale of 'em, they'll begin to know who they belong to."

A murmured whispering was heard in the hall near the dining room door. One of the traders pricked up his ears and said he had several pairs of good bracelets in his pockets—there was nothing like bracelets to bring a nigger to his senses—soon as

of claw stellers organ resoft than all but her any own end that

they're clapped on, a nigger tames down.

"Gentlemen," said Hillyard, rising from the table, "if you want these two, we must nab 'em right away. They're out there now confabbing together—three of us must go out at this door, the other three at that; we'll surround 'em, clap on the brace-

lets, and the job's done."

This strategy was put into execution. When the half-dozen men rushed upon the dusky lovers, their woolly heads were bent close together in whispered talk, his arm was around her waist, but their thoughts were not on love-making at that moment. They were discussing the dreadful looks of the men in the dining room. In a flash—quick as a stroke of lightning, the two lovers were in the firm grasp of strong men, handkerchiefs clapped on their mouths, and handcuffs on their wrists. So sudden was the shock that both seemed to lose all strength, their limbs became limp and nerveless as rags, and gave way under them, they sank to the ground, but were jerked up and held up by the men.

Hillyard's cold, malignant eyes had a dangerous gleam in

them.

"Come," he cried fiercely, "don' play the d——d fool in that way! It won't be good for you! Stand up on your legs, d——n you!"

"We're not goin' to eat you, don't be afeard!" said one of the

traders encouragingly.

"Give 'em a pull of the brandy," suggested another trader,

"brandy'll bring 'em to."

"A touch o' cow-skin'll warm 'em up,' said one of the white guards, who had felt himself the mark for so many scornful, contemptuous, and biting glances from the negroes' eyes, during ther attendance on Hillyard, a great deal of spite was engendered in his heart, and he seized the chance to vent it on the help-less blacks.

The poor creatures were dragged into the dining room and forced to swallow a mouthful of brandy, but even that powerful stimulant did not seem to restore nervous strength to their limp legs. When the white hands were removed from them, down they sank to the floor, their heads hanging on their breasts. They were lifted up and put in two chairs. Hillyard stood before them, his angry eyes glaring.

"Now listen!" he said fiercely. "Hold your heads up and

listen!"

The two heads were lifted up by one of the white men, their eyes rolled, their mouths gasped for breath, but the moment the white support was gone down dropped the heads, and the two black bodies seemed ready to sink in a crushed heap on the floor. Hillyard was in a rage.

"D—n you! can't you listen?" he said. "I'm your master—you can't get away! Remember that! There's no power to come between you and me—I'm going to sell you—I'm going to sell the last nigger of the Ashcourt estate. You are eating off

your heads here. Now, if you'll behave yourselves and give me no trouble, by——! I'll sell you to a good master, if you put on airs and raise a row, by——! you'll catch h——!! Now

come on!"

This spirited address certainly did not meet with the success it deserved. The two blacks were dragged to the auction block on the lawn between the four white men, who held them up all the way. They were set down on a bench, under the eyes of two white men, and ordered not to budge. By a series of similar strategies a number of negroes were captured and placed by the side of Thet and Damon, Tallyrand among them.

When Daddy Dick saw his son and granddaughter in this painful predicament, the tears rolled down his wrinkled, brown cheeks. Rising slowly, the old man trudged up to where Tallyrand sat in the row with the other doomed slaves; he laid his

hand on his son's broad shoulder.

"Bar up, Tally," he said, trembling with age and grief, "bar up, my boy; put yo' trus' in de Lawd, Tally—He am de way an' de 'spote (support)."

A deep groan was all the answer poor Tally could give; the

tears rolled down his broad cheeks.

The old man laid his hand on his granddaughter's shoulder, but spoke no words—words were inadequate. When describing his feelings after the severe ordeal was over, Daddy Dick said:

"It 'peared like de bery bottom ob de yarf itse'f was droppin' out, an' de whole wul was a sinkin' down to whar dar is gnashin' o' teef an' weepin' an' wailin' in de pitch dawk, wid Satan an' his set, down in de lake o' suffer (sulphur)an' melted lead."

The white men crowded close up around the autioneer, the negroes crowded around the white men, all more or less agitated and disturbed. Some of the women wept aloud, but Hillyard soon put a stop to that by threatening that he'd flog "to an inch of his life any one who made a noise."

The first negro knocked off was a young fellow of sixteen or or seventeen, a field hand, who seemed rather to like the situation, he grinned good-naturedly at the praises of the auctioneer,

much to the indignation of the other negroes.

"Dat ar' niggah's a bawn fool," said a woman on the outskirts of the crowd. "He sech a tone-down fool, he dunno wat's a gwine on."

"He'll kotch it time 'nough," replied one of the black men,

with a gloomy brow.

The youth was knocked down to one of the traders, another field hand was put up and bid off at a fair price, and still another; each one, as he stepped down from the stand, the property of a new master, elicited groans and moans from the assembled blacks.

Then it came Tally's turn. Tally was such a universal favorite and known to have been a particular and especial favorite

with his old master in the past, and equally as beloved by his old master's daughter and granddaughter in the present, that the negroes could hardly realize the dreadful fact that Tally was also to be sold and sent away. Tallyrand's old father followed him to the stand upon which he was to be exhibited to the gaping erowd.

"Bar up, Tally," was the old man's parting exhortation. "Bar up, my boy. De Lawd will pervide fur dem dat puts der trus' in him—de Lawd will take keer o' dem dat trusses in his mussies—Bar up, my boy."

Then the old man returned to his chair under the tree, his head fell on his breast, the tears trickled down his brown old cheeks, and his lips moved in silent prayer.

The auctioneer, who was a very lively little man, with peart, vivacious little eyes, seemed to take a lively pleasure in the part he was playing in the great show; he welcomed the amiable looking Tally with exuberant cordiality.

"Come up,my fine fellow," he said, taking Tally by the hand. "Come right along and show these gentlemen what a number-one-er you are!"

Here he gazed admiringly on the chattel, turning him round

and round, so as to see all sides.

"Fine fellow," he cried, patting him on the back. "Splendid fellow! (patting him on the chest) Worth his weight in gold real yellow gold! (patting him on the head, though he had to reach up to do it) Here's your trusty house servant! Look at his countenance—good as a prayer book with a gold clasp to it! Look at his build !—a Sampson—a perfect Sampson! Look in his eyes!—amiable as a kitten, a child might lead him! Here's a chest for you! (slapping Tally's broad breast—the poor fellow did not seem to be particularly elated by the many compliments he was getting) What are you going to start this number one fellow at? Who'll begin with a thousand?—Worth it—every cent of a thousand, and more too! I tell you, gentlemen, if any of you are going into the sculpture line and want a model for a Sampson, here he is! Here's your model! Sound as a dollar! Warranted, no consumption—except the old-fashioned consumption of hog and hominy, (this brought out various guffaws from the crowd of whites, the blacks failed to see the wit). That's the kind of consumption this number-one fellow complains of! Look at his muscle! Why, this boy's worth his thousands! The best coachman in the State! The very chap to look after women and children! Sound as a dollar! What'll you start him at? No shortness of wind! (pounding on Tally's breast) No heart affection—except kindness of heart, and that he's chock full of!"

Another guffaw from the whites, a groan from the blacks,

and the bidding commenced briskly.

During all this time the subject of these eulogies stood as do-

cile as a lamb, and bore the punchings, and poundings, an pattings, and heard those sinister compliments, with a solemn, woe-

begone face.

Tally was knocked down at \$1,050. Hillyard was highly pleased. Tally's purchaser took him by the hand and led him to the tree where sat his old father, with his head sunk on his breast.

This new purchaser was a little, amiable man, a stranger to all on the ground. The traders looked at him in some curiosity; they had fully expected to get Tally into their own clutches, but this little, pleasant-looking man, at the last minute, put in his bid, and the negro was knocked down to him.

"Cheer up, my good fellow," said Tally's new master, kindly, "Cheer up; you have friends to stand by you."

Then he went back to the stand. Daddy Dick was struck by the kind voice, he looked up at the pleasant face and thanked the Lord that he had sent his son a good master. Tally was not so much consoled, the tears trickled down his cheeks. der, indeed—sold from home, friends, wife, and children!

felt that all the light had departed from his life.

The next chattel put up was Tally's daughter, Thetty, who had to be supported on the stand by two men. If left to herself an instant, her knees gave way, and she dropped in a huddle to the ground. When Daddy Dick saw that his granddaughter was up for sale, he again rose slowly, he was a great, heavy, old man, and went up to Tally's new master, the little, pleasant-faced man, and pulled him by the sleeve to get his attention.

"She's a good gal, Massa" he said in an entreating tone. "She's a good gal, an' a smart un-ef Massa'll on'y buy her too,

so's she'll keep 'long wid her pappy!"

The little, pleasant-faced man said he'd do his best—he'd be sure to do his best. Whereupon the old negro went back to his son feeling that there was much to be thankful for.

"De Lawd is good to dem as trusses in him," he muttered, with pious resignation, laying his great brown hand upon Tally's shoulder. "I's been a prayin' for you night an' day, Tally," he said, "a prayin' eber sence dat ar' bad man got hisself stuck up in ole Massa's place. I's been prayin' de good Lawd fur ter open a way outen dis dawk wil'erness, so de people o' Ashcote mout kotch sight o' de promise' lan, an' ef so be, you an' Thetty was to go 'way from yo' homes, an' yo' people, you mout go to-gedder, an' be wid one'noder, an' fine a master what wouldn' be too s'vere, an' I prayed de good Lawd to hab mussy on dese Ashcote folks, an' bless de good Lawd, Tally! hit do 'pear like he's. a hearin' o' my pra'r, an' sent a mussiful master to take kere o' you an' Thet."

Even this cheerful view of the situation did not enliven poor Tally to any great extent. His wife was laid up at home, in his little cabin, with a new baby—he had bidden her good-bye

with apprehension and anxiety, but still with hope—with strong hope that he would not be troubled, that the new master would not dare to sell a servant so trusted and beloved by the ladies of the house. Now that hope was dead, and poor Tally's heart felt

like lead within his breast.

When the lively little auctioneer saw the limp and drooping Thetty pushed and lifted upon the stand, he broke into broad smiles, with the amiable intention of counteracting the dismal impression the girl was bound to make upon the audience. He grinned and jested, chucked Thetty under the chin, winked at the crowd and said she dropped her head to hide her blushes, whereat the crowd gave a loud guffaw and began to see some-

thing very funny in the poor girl's miserable condition.

"Now, gentlemen," said the lively little auctioneer, "I offer you, not only a number-one house girl—a perfect treasure—her mistress is now crying her eyes out at parting with her!—a diamond of the first water, a young lily of the valley, a daisy, fair as a flower, as you can see for yourselves! Tender as a spring chicken! Sold for no fault of her own! Docile as a young duck, faithful as a field-mule to the sound of the twelve-o'clock dinner horn! (another loud guffaw) Honest, smart—her young mistress values her above all price! What'll you start her at? Give her a bid! Who says five hundred?—Five hundred!—Five hundred and—fifty—do I hear?"

Poor Thet, at every allusion to her young mistress, showed an increased weakness in the knees, and a stronger tendency to sink down in a huddle at the feet of the lively little auctioneer. The bids were rather slow, owing, as Hillyard thought, to the girl's obstinate determination to look her very worst on purpose to injure him—"d——n her!" She was knocked down to the same

little old gentleman who had purchased her father.

"Who the devil is he?" asked one of the disappointed traders.

No one knew him.

"He doesn't look like one of our trade," said another.

"No; a d-d sight more like a Methodist parson," said the

"Pluck up your spirits, my girl," said the pleasant little old gentleman, as he led his newly purchased chattel to her father and grandfather. "Keep a good heart, you've got friends—you may depend on that—good friends, they have not forgotten you. There—stay with your pappy and grandpappy until I come for you."

Damon was the next one put up. Damon's condition was but little, if any, better than Thetty's. He was put on the stand by two white men, who stood on either side, pulling him up whenever he began to drop down. The crowd broke into a roar of laughter at the sight of his drooping figure, and down-hung head.

Hillyard, who was out of humor, and angry enough because Thetty's dismal and down-dropping tendency had injured her

sale, was still more enraged at Damon's "playing the same game," as he put it. He really thought the poor creatures affected weakness on purpose to vex and injure him, so little could he understand the way negroes must feel under such circumstances.

Going close up to Damon, Hillyard tried with fierce looks and dreadfully threatening words to stimulate him to hold up his head, look alive and attractive, so as to bring a good price, but all with no perceptible effect. Damon's knees shook as with a palsy, his head hung on his breast, his long wool, usually so smoothly combed and rolled on the top of his head, was now in a most rumpled and rough state, torn up during his struggle with the traders, who captured and dragged him out.

His grandmother, Mammy Rose, a large-framed, stately and dignified, brown-skinned woman, had, from the beginning of the execrable proceedings, stood on the outskirts of the black crowd, the whites crowded close around the platform, the negroes crowded up behind the whites. Mammy Rose stood aloof; she towered up above the women near her, looking over their heads. She had a full view of the little auctioneer and his victim. Always grave and serious and severe, Mammy Rose's countenance was now stern and savage. A storm raged in her black breast, lurid fires burned in her eyes. A tall turban towered up on her head, tufts of gray hair stuck out from the temples, her face was square-cut, the under jaw bones strong and prominent, giving her a look of great power. When the lively little auctioneer laid his hands on Damon's shoulder, and the poor fellow seemed ready to drop to the earth, his head sunk on his breast, it was more than his grandmother could stand. With burning eyes and stern-set face she strode through the crowd of blacks and whites, pushing them aside with her strong hands, until she reached the stand, sprang upon it, laid one hand on Damon with a firm grasp, and with the other gave a shove to the lively little auctioneer, which sent him backward a yard or so, much to his amazement; he, an auctioneer, profaned by a push from the hands of a slave! He had auctioned off many a negro, and such a monstrous deed had never occurred before.

However, being a lively little man and fertile in expedients, he recovered himself quickly and skipped back to the front ready with his quirk and gibe to turn the laugh on his side.

But what were quirks and gibes to an enraged maternal heart? Mammy Rose met him with the glare of a tigress fighting for her cub.

"Keep yo' han's offen dis boy!" she said with stern command. "Sech as you is got no business to lay de weight o' yo' little

finger on dis boy—keep off!"

Hillyard, who was standing at the moment a few yards away from the auction block, strode up to it with anger at the old negress' interference with the sale. He looked upon resistance as the very height of impudence, coming from so low a creature as a slave woman. Jumping on the platform, he seized the woman's arm to drag her down, he was a strong, six-foot, broadshouldered man; she was a strong, well-knit, muscular woman, descended from a race of muscular African savages. Despair made her daring, sense of wrong made her ferocious. She turned her eyes, gleaming yellow fire, like an enraged panther's, on her assailant, and glared at him as if she could tear him to pieces.

"Git down and out! you infernal old fool!" Hillyard yelled, dragging at the woman with all his might.

She dropped her grip on Damon, threw one arm around a slender sapling growing by the side of the stand, and held back with powerful muscle.

"Git down, and clear off, if you don't want to get yourself whaled to an inch of your life!" he shouted, still more enraged

by her resistence.

An angry tigress, from her native jungles of Africa, could have looked no more savagely dangerous than that outraged slave-

"You!" she shouted in ringing tones, "You!-low-down thief! -You lay yo' low-down han's on me!—Who stole ole master's will?—Answer dat ef you dars!—Who stole ole master's will? -You knows! - Thief! - Robber! - Liar! - Liar! - Robber!

-Thief!"

These words she hurled in his face with such scorching force, they burned like a blister. Hillyard's rage lost all bounds, a murderous devil darted from his eyes, he raised his clenched fist to fell her to the earth, quick as a panther, she dashed herself on his breast, threw her strong arms around his neck in a strangling embrace, and bore him backward by the power of her For a few seconds the batttle between the man and the woman was about even; how it would have ended had there been a fair fight can never be known, for, alas! and alas! the instinct of race, of class, which, in this poor world of ours, so often overrides and overwhelms the sense of justice, brought to the man the assistance of his own class, and sex. White men gathered around the combatants, loosened the black fingers from the throat and hair of their white brother, seized and overpowered the woman, threw her on the ground, clapped manacles on her hands, gagged her mouth, and tied her feet. And as she lay there, utterly helpless, among all the crowd of whites there were but two in whose breasts the sense of justice rose superior to the prejudice of class, color and race. The one was the purchaser of Thetty and Tally, the other was our old acquaintance, Calyx, whose liberal nature so hated injustice, he sympathized with the oppressed of every class and both sexes.

Physically, Calyx knew he was powerless to help this woman those who wronged her were backed by that power, called "law" —that invisible thing which has wrought more suffering, committed more crime, done more evil, than all the evil doers it attempted to punish.

As Hillyard was about to strike the woman, Calyx caught his up-raised arm and expostulated upon the brutality of the act, and with as little effect as a mad bull would feel from the blowing of a gentle zephyr.

Hillyard planted his knee on the woman's breast to hold her down while they gagged and made her fast. Calyx turned away,

sick at heart.

"And this," he thought, "this is called the age of civiliza-

tign!"

To escape the revolting scene, Calyx turned his back on the crowd and gazed over and beyond—on the peaceful heavens above, on the calm sea in the distance, on whose waves the bright sunlight danced and glittered, and the white-sailed boats floated like winged birds. All nature was fair and serene and lovely; earth, air, sky, and water, were beautiful, and smiled benificently on man. Man makes his own woes and wretchedness. All animals of the same kind and kin, save man, are friendly and peaceful to each other. They band together against their common foes. Man is man's worst enemy. While reflections of this saddening nature were passing through the young student's mind, as he gazed on the distant scene, he saw a horse and rider, coming at full tilt down the road, turn in through the park gate, and come on with the most impetuous gallop.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DOLLY TO THE FRONT.

Calyx's eyes followed the horseman with that sort of vague interest which is aroused by wild haste. The motion was so rapid Calyx did not recognize his old friend and fellow student Charlmonte until he reigned up his foaming horse on the outskirts of the crowd sprung to the ground and plunged in among the blacks; nor did Calyx see, until Charlmonte dismounted, that he was not alone on the horse, that a black and lean negress with a tall turban on her head was perched up behind him. When Charlmonte dismounted the lean negress nimbly slipped herself into the saddle, seized the bridle, gave it a quick jerk, dug her heels into the animals flanks and started off in a gallop toward the house. It flashed across Calyx's mind that he had heard Charlmonte declare that nothing on earth could induce him to witness the auction, that negro auctions were spectacles revolting to gods and men, yet here he came almost at break-neck speed to see that revolting sight. Charlmonte pushed his way through the crowd and reached the auction block just as the men had completed their work of fettering and gagging Mammy Rose who lay panting with such a look of dumb despair on her old brown face as never before sun shone upon. But no pity stirred the heart of the new master, even as the woman lay prostrate and helpless, bound hand and foot, his rage not yet appeased, he raised his hand to deal a parting blow, with an oath telling her he'd let her know who was master of Ashcourt, he or she."

"That is the lesson I have come to teach you, scoundrel!" cried Charlmonte striking down the upraised hand, seizing him by the collar and hurling him in among the crowd against which he stumbled, picked himself up and turned on this fresh assailant.

ant.

"I don't want any row with you, young man," said Hillyard gruffly, "go about your business and leave me to mine—Auctioneer go on with the sale, we're losing time."

Two other men were now seen galloping up, these also sprung from their horses, pushed their way up to the stand and stood by

Charlmonte.

"Go on with the sale!" yelled Hillyard.

"I forbid the sale!" cried Charlmonte jumping up on the stand by the side of the lively little auctioneer who looked dazed and dumb at so extraordinary a proceeding, never in his experience had a "nigger auction" had so many accidents. Hillyard glowered in silent rage at the young man wondering what would turn up next. What did turn up was furthest from his thoughts.

"I forbid the sale," repeated Charlmonte throwing out his strong, clear voice so that it was heard by the furthest ear, "because this man has no right to sell one single item of the Ashcourt estate, he has no more right to call himself the master of these negroes than they have to call themselves his master."

"That's a lie!" roared Hillyard, "that's an infamous lie! a conspiracy of my wife's kin to swindle me out of my rights as husband of old Henry Ashford's daughter, his only daughter. Touch that woman at your peril, she is my slave and by ——! I'll go for any man, to the full extremity of the law, who dares to interfere between me and my slaves."

This last threat was hurled at the two men who had just galloped up and pushed their way to Charlmote. In obedience to Charlmonte's command these two men begun to relieve Mammy Rose of the gyves that bound her. The men did not notice the threat but went on untieing until they lifted her up and gave her

a sip of brandy to restore her fainting spirit.

At that instant the two Island glrls, Miss Charlmonte and Miss Ashford, with Dolly at their heels were seen coming swiftly forward from the house. Both black and white opened and made a lane for the three women to go on up to the auction block, the center of intense interest, the object of every eye.

Hillyard stood on the stand appealing to the crowd.

"I appeal to every man in the state," he roared, "to sustain me in my rights—my rights are men's rights—I am the legal husband of old Henry Ashford's only daughter; every man knows the law makes a husband the sole owner and proprietor of his wife's property, the law of South Carolina says what is a wife's

is her husband's."

"I appeal to every honest man in the State of South Carolina;" I denounce this man as a thief and liar. Henry Ashford left a will demising his property to his granddaughter, said will strictly excluded this man from any share or part in the property; that man hired a burglar to break open the late Henry Ashford's desk and purloin his last will and testament. Thank Heaven! that will is found, the rascality is exposed, the true heir is here

to pronounce every sale fraudulent and void," said Charlmonte.
The crowd of whites gave a yell of satisfaction although a moment before they had been ready to yell for the thief and gambler; the blacks, more slow to take in the facts, gave a general

groan not exactly eeing which way the wind blew.
"By ——!" roared Hillyard driven to desperation, "what does all this d—n foolery mean? I had this stand put up for my What right has my wife's kin to interfere with my afown use. fairs?"

"Gentlemen," cried Charlmonte, "the late Henry Ashford's last will and testament is now in my possession, this lady is his sole heir. You shall hear from the finder of that will how it was stolen and how found."

Foaming at the mouth, livid with rage Hillyard swore it was a

lie, a conspiracy of his wife's kin.

The crowd showed their interest in the matter in a way more forcible than polite.

"Trot her out!" shouted one.

"Fetch her to the front!" halloed another.
"Give us the whole hog!" yelled another and so on. In obedience to these enthusiastic calls Charlmonte pushed to the front the smiling Dolly, who, nowise abashed, dropped two or three of her most amiable courtesies to the wondering crowd who shout-

ed and clapped and laughed at the novelty of the show. .

A sickening sensation came over Hillyard at the sight of this black and lean aparition. The scene and the place where he had first seen her and the memory of his conversation with Carson, rushed upon him with an awful force, his face blanched, his knees smote together, his eyes, staring and fixed, had in them the very agony of anxiety as if the last plank was giving way and the wild waters hungrily waited to drown him.

"Now Dolly," said Charlmonte, "speak right out and tell these good friends all you know about your old Mas Henry's

Nothing loth Dolly begun her story, not, however, as if she were addressing the gaping curious crowd who pressed up around. as close as they possibly could, but as if she saw no one except her young master.

"You see, Mas Ed'rd," she said, "it was las' Christmas-eve night as I was comin' home from chuch (Dolly had so often said

coming home from church instead of prison that she had come to believe the story herself) whar prar meetin' was guine on, when lo! an' behole! dar in my doah was free little chilluns scrouched up a tryin' to keep dev little sevs wawm, do dey was nigh bout mose fruz to deaf an' mose starv to deaf too; I says to dem chilluns—becaze I knowed dem chilluns an' I knowed der ma was a good 'ooman, a monsus good, 'dustris 'ooman—I says to 'em, says I, 'come long wid me chilluns, Dolly'll tek you to see two rich, gran' ladies whar'll gin you wittels to eat an' close to war, meanin' Miss Roma dar an' Miss Conny, who was bofe on 'em at dat big school in New Yawk a studin der book dat time, so we went long to de big school hus-hit war a powful cole night, sho! an' when we git dar, bless you Mas Ed'rd, if dem gals want 'bout for to set down to de finest supper ole Aunt Rachel eber cook in all her bawn days, which was sont in a box from Miss Conny's ma for dem gals'es Christmas supper, an' when dem young gals seed de po' little chilluns mose fruz an' mose starv to deaf, dey jes up an' says, says dey, 'gin 'em dat good wittles, tek it to der po' ma,' an Miss Roma dar she jes up an' puts on her cloak, an' her hood, an' dat po' Arish man, he totes de box wid de supper in't, an' wen we gin 'em all nuff to eat, an' het up de room wid a good fiah, Miss Roma, she went long back to de big school hus, an' de chilluns and der ma, dey fall fas' asleep, an' I jes querl up in de wawmes' corner on a blanket for tu ketch a little cat nap when, lo an' behole! I heern big heavy feet a comin' up de starsteps, an' dem feets day stop right agin de doah, an' I heern two men a talkin' outside, an' presen'ly dem two oudacious men jes had de imperence to smell dat tukky whar aunt Rachel cook so good, an' come in dar a nosin' 'roun for to get a chance for to fill deysevs wid dat tukky, an' fo' gracious goodness! Mas Ed'rd, dey'd a gobbled it up eby moufful 'ceptin I riz right up an' skeered 'em out'en de room; den dev went into de nex' room whar b'long to one o' dem oudacious men, a po' low-down drunken locksmif, his name which was Carson, an' dey sot down in de locksmif's room, an' talk an' talk an' talk, an' I heern eby wud dey say, an' dat man dar (pointing her claw-like forefinger at the shaking and livid Hillyard) he say he guine gin toder man five t'ousan' dollar ef he go an' get de dockymen for him, den I ups an' axes Mas Ed'rd what was dem varmint dockymens? an' Mas Ed'rd he says, says he, pulliu' ob a paper outen his pocket, he says, says he, 'here, dis is a dockymen, dis hit.' "

"Den I nebber seed dem two mens no moah for long time, not tell arter ole Mas? Henry he tuck sick so bad dey sent for Miss Roma an' Miss Conny for to come home, den fo' I knows, dar was de locksmif right dar, agin my winder, a lookin' in at me.
"'You knows me, eh?' says he.

"'How I gwine to know you, when I neber lay eyes on you afo' in all my bawn days?' says I, as peart as you please, dough I knowed him jes' as well as anybody, but I wouldn' let on

Mas' Ed'rd, becaze you see I knowed dem oudacious men what would a' eat up dat tukky Aunt Rachel cook so good, was up tomischief o' some sort or nudder. So I jes' says to myself, says I, 'Dolly, you jes keep yo' eyes peeled, an' lay low, an' look in'cent as de suckin' dove, an' fine out what dem men's up to.' An' dat locksmif he went back to de same room what he usent to hev, an' dar was a little knot-hole in de wall atwix' his room an' de nex', an' I jes' sot my eye agin de knot-hole for to sce what de locksmif was a doin', an' de nex' day dat man dar (pointing at the stricken Hillyard), he comed to see de locksmif, an' he says, says he, 'I got de dockymen', Hillud, but I's skeered to trus' you,' says he; 'I's done hid de dockymen' tell we settles de ongreemens,' says he. Den dat man (pointing at the shaking criminal) he says, says he, wid a wickedsome cuss wud, says he, 'By G-d!' says he, 'What'd you sen' for me for, ef you ain't agwine for to show me de dockymen'?' Den de locksmif he says, says he, 'I is gwine to show you de docky-men', Hillud, but you's de bigges' man, I's skeered to trus' you, Hillud, 'ceptin' you's tied, so you can't jek it outen my han' an' stroy it 'fo I knows what you's up to,' says de locksmif. Dendat man (always indicating the criminal with her black, clawlike fore-finger) he ups and says, says he, feece as a rattlesnake when you treads on his rattle, says he, 'What de h-ll! Do you mean to 'sult me?' says he, mad as ary fightin' tom-cat wid his tail pulled. Den says de locksmif, says he, 'I's feerd to trus' you, Hillud, an' I ain't agwine to trus' you, 'ceptin' you give memy way 'bout de matter,' says he. Den dat man he says, says he, wid a curus sort o' laugh, says he, 'You's a fool, Carson. Go on wid yo' way den, an' trot it out,' says he. Den de lock-crif he take a rope outen his packet, an' dat man he wate out smif he teks a rope outen his pocket, an' dat man he puts out his han's jes' so (crossing her two hands to illustrate), and' de locksmif he tied dat man's han's tight behine him, den he tied him to de bed postes, arter which de locksmif, he went out o' de room a little while, den he comed back wid a paper, an' he says, holdin' afo' dat man's eyes, says he, 'Disis de gran' dockymen' wuf more'n a hundred tousan' dollars,' says he, 'ef it's wuf a cent,' says he. Den dat man dar, he says, says he, 'You shall hab de berry fus' five tousand dollars I lay han's on, Carson. By —, you shall! for doin' dat good job—a gittin' dat dockymen', says he.

Den, arter dat, de locksmif, he went out o' de room agin, tookin' de dockymen wid him. When he comed back, he untied dat man, an' dat man dar went 'long 'bout his business, leavin' de locksmif dar by hissef. I keep my eye on dat locksmif, an' I keep my eye sot on dat knot-hole in de wall, an I see de locksmif fust of all lock his doah, den I see him tek outen his breas' pocket, dat same dockymen what I heern him say to dat man, as he was agwine to lock up in a bank wid a letter 'structin' de bank folks for to sen' it to de right ownahs in case he was mudded; an' I sees him huntin' roun' an' roun' de room for a good place

for to hide de dockymen' in, an' I heern him say to hissef, 'Gin me five tousan' dollars, eh? You'll gin me fifty-five t'ousan' afo' I's done wid you, sho!' Den he sarch an sarch for a good hidin' place, but he didn' fine one to his notion, so he jes' pulls off his coat an' rips open de linin' in de back, an' he puts de dockymen' in dar atwix' de linin' an' de coat, an' den he jes' gits a needle an' fred an' sews it up; an' by dis time de room was good an' wawm het up by de fiah in de stove, so he jes' hangs his coat up on a nail druv in de doah; den I sees him sot hissef in a cheer by de winder, an' light his pipe an' 'gin to smoke, an' presen'ly he gits a bottle offen a shelf, an' he pours out a dram an' drinks it up an' smokes; den he pours out anoder dram an' drinks dat up an' smokes; an' Mas' Ed'rd, ef he didn' keep on smokin' an' drinkin' a sottin' dar all by hissef tell his head it jes' flopped down dis way (imitating) an' he jeks it up an' stars about, jes' dis way (Dolly imitated the drunken stare so well it caused a roar of laughter), and dat's de way he kep' on, tell down he ker-flopped flat on de floah, an' lay dar a snowin', fas' asleep. Den I jes' runs down stars an' gits a par o' scissors an' a needle an' fred, an' I gits de step-ladder whar I gits on when I cleans de winders, an' I sets dat step ladder agin his doah an' climes up an' gets fro' de transet over his doah, an' I lets mysef down into his room, whar he was a snowin' away, dead drunk like a fool; an' I jes' rips open de linin' o' his coat an' gits dat dockymen' an' chugs it down in my pocket, dis way (imitating); den I sews up de linin' an' hangs up de coat an' clum outen de room fro' dat transet winder ober de doah, an' went away jes' as in'cent as any suckin dove in de lan'. Dat locksmif, he kep' on drinkin free four days fo' he plum soberes Heap o' times he come down to my room an' ax me to go an' git him a bottle o' whisky, den he go at it agin, all by hissef, a drinkin' an' a smokin'. An' dat man (meaning Hilyard) he come to see him mos' eby day, an' he ax him whar he put de dockymen'. An' de locksmif, he says, says he, 'Neber you mine, it's safe, it's all right, if anything happens to me you won't get it, member dat,' says de locksmif, says he. 'You's a drunken fool, Carson,' says dat man, says he, 'What you so 'spicious o' bein' kill for ?—you's a killin' of yosef fas' enough,' says he, 'widout no hep from me,' says he. Den arter a while de locksmif he sober up, sho nuff, an' bime by he begin to look monsus low-down in de mouf an' trouble in his mine, becase he couldn' fine de dockymen'. I watch him from de knot-hole, I sees him a sarchin' an' a sarchin' ebery hole an' corner, an' a rippin up his coat, a lookin' in de linin', but I neber lets on; an' bime by he comes down to my room, whar I was a singin' uv a chuch hymn an' a patchin' o' my ole flannan petticoat, as in'cent as ary suckin' dove, an' he says, says he, as polite as a basket o' chips, says he, 'Dolly, is you foun' any paper 'bout de house?' says he. 'An' I says, says I, smoove as honey melted up wid butter, says I, 'I seed some ole scrap o' newspaper in de

hall,' says I, 'an' I swep it up an chug it in de fiah,' says I, in'cent as de suckin' lam'-' was dem de ones?' says I. Den he says, says he, lookin' mose monsus low-down in de mouf, says he, 'No, hit want no scrap o' newspaper, hit was writin', on paper like dis,' says he, takin' of a dockymen' outen his pocket an' holdin' it afo' my eyes, 'kinder sorter like dis,' he says, says he. Den I says, says I lookin' as in'cent as ary tukle dove, 'I ain't seed no writin' paper-no, sir-a layin' 'bout,' says I, ef I was to see a writin' paper layin' 'bout de floah, I'd be sho to pick it up an' take good keer on it. I neber buns no writin' paper,' says I. Den dat locksmif he look monsus low-down in de mouf, an' he says, says he, 'I done loss a paper wid writin' on it, kinder sorter like dis yer paper; ef you fines it,' says he, 'I gin you a golden gole dollar,' says he. Den I says, says I, 'I gwine hunt for dat paper; it mout a blowed somers under de beds, or de burers; I gwine hunt all ober de house, you bet I will, becaze I wants to git dat golden gole dollar, I do dat-bad.' But, Mas' Ed'rd, I neber got dat golden gole dollar—nary time, I jes' helt on to dat dockymen, an' arter a while de locksmif he went away, an' I heern as ole Mas' Henry was took so bad, an' was gone over Jordan, an I kep thinkin' an' thinkin 'bout de ole Islan' folks, tell I jes' ups an' comes down, an' neber knowed 'bout dat man dar bein' so oudacious as to set hissef up as de master o'de Ashcote folks tell I seed Miss Roma, an' Miss Roma she ups an' tells me all about hit. Den I says, says I: 'Miss Roma, ef de good Lawd spars my life, I's gwine to Richlan' for to get a good look at dat oudacious man, he was a-staying at Richlan' den, a-tormentin de folks dar wid his oudacious ways.' So I ups an' goes to Richlan' an' I walks 'long by de gin hus, whar dat man was a-weighin' de cotton dat de niggers pick outen de fiel' an' tote up in der big baskets, an' de fus' minute I sot eyes on dat man, Mas Ed'rd, I knowed him, I knowed he was de same man what kep on a-talkin' 'bout de dockymens, an' fo' de Lord, Mas Ed'rd, I come nigh droppin' down right dar on de groun', I was so awful tuck aback when I seed he war de same po' white trash as tried for ter get hole o' dit tukky Miss Roma fotch dem chillun's ma. I jes got so weak in de knees, I sorter let down easy an' quirled up dar agin one o' de cotton bales, an' jes sot dar an' star wid all my eyes at dat man till presently, Mas Ed'rd, it 'peared like somefin' come to me and says, says dat ar somefin, says hit, 'Git up Doll, an' get dat dockymen outen yo' bag o' close, an' jes go right straight an' show it to yo' Mas Ed'rd.' So I jes ups an' goes straight to Daddy Dick's house whar I lef my bag o' close, an' I jes fish down 'mong all dem close and quilt scraps, what I's savin' up for to make a log-cabin quilt, an' gets dat dockymen an' goes straight back to Charmon Hall an' dar I seed young Mas Ed'rd, monsus low down in de mouf, becaze de Ashcote folks were took up for to sell by dat ar oudacious man; an' I says, says I, 'Mas Ed'rd, if you please for to read dis yer dockymen, an' gin me a

glimpse what is de nater o' de critter?' Den Mas Ed'rd he look at it dis way, (attempting to imitate astonishment) an' if he didn't tun jes as white as ary ghose you ever seed in yo' bawn days! an' he farly shook all over same as if he was gwine to shake hissef to pieces. Den I gets to shaken too becaze I gets awful skeered. I says to mysef, says I, 'Oh, you fool niggah! You's done gone an' gin yo' young master de wustes' dockymen in de wul'!' Den Mas Ed'rd, he ups an' says says he, lookin' at me sorter fierce like an' a-tremblin' all over same as ef he had de shakin' agu, says he, 'Whar did you git dis dockymen?' Den I ups an' tells him jes how hit was, an' all I knowed bout dem two oudacious men a-comin to gobble up dat big tuky whar aunt Rachel cook so good for Miss Roma an' Miss Conny. Den Mas Ed'rd he says, says he, a-shakin' like de shakin' agu, says he, 'Oh, Dolly, you's done done it! You's done done it!' den he farly flied outen de room to whar his pa, Ole Mas Ed'rd, was a-sottin on de poch, looking monsus low down in de mouf, an' I says to mysef, says I, 'Oh, you fool niggah—you big tone-down fool niggah, for to fetch yo' Mas Ed'rd sech a awful mean dockymen as dat!' an' I says to mysef, says I, 'Dat's what you gits for foolin' long wid dockymens, an' I sots to, right den and dar an' begins to ax de good Lawd for to look over sech sinful sins, an' gin me hebenly spote an' put my trus' in de blood o' de Lam' an' I hearn young Mas Ed'rd say to his pa, says he, 'Look at it! Ain't it wonderful! Ain't it ginywine?' meanin' de dockymen. Den bime-by ole Mas Ed'rd an' young Mas Ed'rd dey comed up to whar I was a-standin', prayin' to de good Lawd, an' dey jes kotch me by de han' an' gin me a ole-fashion hug, de teahs in dey eyes, an' ole Mas Ed'rd he says, says he, 'Dolly, you's a reglar black dimon—you is! You is de Affyken Ko-no—you is!' Den I jes begins to see fro dat oudacious dockymen varmint, an' dat's all I knows, Mas Ed'rd."

Dolly came to a sudden halt; instantaneously her countenance underwent a change. While telling her story, her face had preserved a sober seriousness, not once exhibiting any consciousness of the curious crowd gazing upon her, listening with breathless interest. When she came to a sudden halt, she turned and looked at the crowd, her black visage beaming, her teeth gleaming white, her whole face and person seemed to radiate smiles and good humor, she dropped her best plantation courtesy, then with a modest air stepped nimbly back and stood in the rear by

the side of the two young ladies.

And now a curious hubbub began. It seemed as if a storm was blowing up, the whole mass of black and white humanity surged and swayed as a sheet of water by a strong wind. There were not more than seventy-five or a hundred whites and many hundred blacks. The slaves from all of the island plantations were there. The whites were of the rougher class, sailors, marketmen, wharf rats from the city; the negro traders were the most respectable present, every one knows how these latter were look-

ed upon by the so-called aristocratic classes, though why they should deem it aristocratic to own negroes and deeply plebeian to buy and sell them is one of the inconsistencies men indulge in. Negroes from other places had come from sympathy with the Ashcourt negroes, the whites had come principally to enjoy the free tobacco and free whisky so liberally dispensed on such occasions. Before Dolly began her story, the crowd was pretty well warmed up by the whisky and tobacco, handed around by two of the Ashcourt field-hands, bribed by the new master to perform that work assiduously by the promise of a gallon of whisky. The whites were the first to give vent to the excitement caused by the singular turn events had taken and the quantity of bad whisky they had drunk. As Dolly concluded her story, they burst out in loud yells, shouts and cries.

"Bully for the little nigger!" shouted one.

"Three cheers for the bully little black!" howled another, while there swept over the black crowd a sort of low, rumbling growl—not unlike the rumble of distant thunder when a storm is brewing. Calyx, who was with the negroes, intently observing their emotions, said a lurid fire seemed to burn in their eyes and fiercely lighted up their black faces—as the phosphorescent eyes of savage beasts light up the darkness with a yellow glow. Charlmonte instinctively felt that danger was at hand and strove to disperse the crowd, raising his voice above the mutterings of the storm, he announced that the sale was over, they might now return to their homes, but they did not disperse, on the contrary they closed up in closer compact around the auction block—the growls and groans and shouts became louder and fiercer, the whites taking the lead.

"Three groans and a wild tiger for the devil with a black heart!" yelled out a great brawny Caucasian with stentorian lungs and a mane of unkempt sandy hair and beard, not

unlike a lion's.

The groans and the wild tiger were howled forth with such vim and feeling, the emotional blacks repeated with double and soulful force. The Caucasian with mane of sandy beard and unkempt hair, encouraged by the success of his first effort, assumed the part of a leader and kept up propositions of a similiar nature, calculated to stir the blood of the white and black savage. One of the latter, a woman-a common field-hand, the mother of the first negro who had been put on the block and sold, all of a sudden, under the inspiration of the shouts and murmurs and groans and wild tigers going on, seemed to come to a realizing sense of the outrage done to her maternal feelings, all of a sudden she felt her maternal heart born with a fierce desire for vengeance. When this desire first leaped to life in her half savage soul, she was standing on the outskirts of the negro crowd, she was a woman of Amazonian proportions, color and features of the most pronounced African type.

"Lemme get at him! Lemme get at him!" was the cry from

the thick, black lips of this black Amazon as she made a lane with her strong, black arms through the crowd, up to the stand

around which the crowd was surging.

Hillyard was now the center of the crowd, toward him every black pushed his way, each one wanted to get a good look at so tremendous a rogue. He was the show and object of gibes, jeers, and taunts. The two white men held him in custody. striving to make their way through the dense mass of ireful mor-

"Lemme git at 'im! Lemme git at 'im!" muttered the Amazon, pushing her way, a storm cloud on her black brow-lurid

fire in her phosphorescent eyes.

"Gin her way. Let her git at 'im," cried an old negro man, aiding her to make a lane through the crowd. "Let her git at 'im! He sole her boy—her son, Sam. Gin her way!—gin her way!" Dar, niggers!"

This enlisted the others on her side.

"Tar 'im to pieces!" cried one.

"Fall on 'im toof an nail!" cried another.

"Choke 'im to deaf, Mandy Jane!" shouted another.

These remarks of course increased the maternal rage of the Amazon, by the time she had pushed her way to the white crowd, she was a black fury, wrought up to the highest pitch by the yelps and howls and cries of the crowd. The white men saw her—heard the cry, "Gin her way! He stole her boy! Gin her way! Let her git at 'im!" &c., and added theirs to the general row.

"Choke 'im to deaf, Mandy Jane!" howled a stentorian black. "Choke 'im to deaf."

"Go for him, Nancy Blacking-Box!" yelled the Caucasian

with the mane of sandy hair.

This gentleman had a bottle in his pocket, the contents of which he took a pull at now and then by way of keeping up his strength.

"Tar out his eyes! Knock out his front teeth and keep 'em to remember him by!" he shouted, which piece of wit being well received by the crowd, so encouraged the Caucasian with the sandy mane, he continued his efforts.

"Snatch him bald! Grind him into sassengers, Polly Powder

Horn!" he yelled.

"Sling him into shoe-strings!" shouted a little fellow, in imita-

tion of the man with the mane of unkempt hair.

By this time the black Amazon had pushed and fought her way up to the auction block and stood face to face with the object of her rage—a mad tigress with lurid eyes and strong black fingers that worked convulsively with the instinct to clutch and rend.

"Lemme git at 'im! Lemme git at 'im!" was still her cry as she fell upon him with all her weight, while the strong, black fingers of one hand clutched him by the hair of his head, and the other aimed at his throat. Hillyard saw his danger and begged

the two white men who had him in charge to save him from the

black devil.

"Tear her off! She'll choke me to death!" he cried, in a panic of fear. "Keep off the d—d blacks!—they'll murder me!"

The two men succeeded after a severe struggle, in loosing her clutch on his hair and throat. Charlmonte, who knew the woman, spoke to her with stern authority.

"For shame !- for shame," he cried, "will you bring on your

soul the sin of murder?"

"Lemme git at 'im. Lemme git at 'im!" was the mad refrain of the mad Amazon. Totally insensible to the reproof, which under ordinary circumstances would have been received as sacred. Charlmonte still feeling a sense of danger, urged the two white men to push on with their prisoner, to get him out and beyond the angry crowd, but this was easier said than done, whichever way they turned, they met a wall of men pushing up to gaze at, jeer at, gibe and mock the unhappy wretch.

At this moment that ominous cry was heard, "Lynch him! Lynch him!" which seemed to leap instantaneously from five hundred throats. It struck terror to Charl-

monte's heart.

What law-loving American does not turn pale and shudder when he hears a mob shout for that merciless judge?—that judge not born of a woman, but of the concrete and concentrated rage of a savage multitude. Charlemonte, Calyx, and the two officers of the law who had charge of Hillyard, heard that howl with horror; they knew what it meant. The prisoner also knew; the very name of the pitiless judge struck terror to his soul. These five white men were the center of the angry crowd. In vain they attempted to push their way through the mob; the blacks resisted and pressed upon them closer, glaring at the prisoner with eyes that gleamed like the eyes of carnivorous beasts. The angry Amazon continually grabbed the prisoner, and was as often fended off. Pale and panting, Hillyard begged the white men to save him from the black devils, who surrounded and pressed them in closer and closer. In vain the whites attempted to force a way through the dense mass. As if with one mind the negroes resisted. And now that invisible, pitiless and unreasoning judge, which was evoked into existence by the rage of the mob, made his influence felt. His spirit began to indicate the sentence he meant to execute.

"Ride 'im on a rail! Ride 'im on a rail!" roared the hench-

men of Judge Lynch.

"Tar an' feder 'im! Tar an' feder 'im!" shouted others fully

as valorous for mischief.

The black Amazon raised her voice, magnificent in power and not unmelodious, for a more murderous sentence: "Hang 'im to de lim' o' de live-oak tree!" sang out the Amazon at the top

of her lungs. A hundred voices took it up and sang out the words as if they were a camp-meeting song:

"Hang 'im to de lim' o' de live-oak tree! Hang 'im to de lim' o' de live-oak tree!"

Then a dismal refrain was added.

. "Hang im to de lim' o' de live-oak tree!
Yo! ho! yo! ho!"

While this ominous song was sung out from more than a hundred throats, the whole mass was moving onward, in what direction the white men could not tell, surrounded as they were by a wall of blacks. The maternal Amazon could not be driven from the prisoner. She danced about him, swaying her, strong, oily, odorous body to the rythm of her song, now and then ceasing to sing for a moment, in order to torment the unfortunate wretch in an ingenious and original way. She would thrust her great black face and yellow, gleaming eyes in his, gnash her teeth at him, snarl and snap at him as a dog, then resuming her song and her dance, ringing out the words with great enthusiasm, close to his ear:

"Hang 'im to de lim' o' de live-oak tree!
Yo! ho! yo! ho!
Hang 'im to de lim' o' de live-oak tree!
Yo! ho! yo! ho!"

Then she stopped and made a grab at Hillyard's hair, bringing out a handful in her strong, black fingers. This so delighted her she stopped and danced a jig up and down, the perspiration streaming from her black brow. At this moment from the foremost of the crowd there was added a line to the song:

"'Cept* we fling 'im to de sharks in de bottom o' de sea!
Yo! ho! yo! ho!
'Cept we fling 'im to de sharks in de bottom o' de sea!
Yo! ho! yo! ho!

This addition struck Charlmonte with consternation; he inferred from the change of idea from hanging to drowning that they were moving on to the sea—to the cliff, with the intention

of throwing the man over it.

Charlmonte knew that all the old African savagery, which for over two hundred years had been so kept under by their white masters that amiable docility appeared to be the natural character of negroes, all that old inherent savagery was now up, alive, fierce, and hungry for the blood of the man they hated with a deadly hatred. The civilization they had been taught, the Christianity they professed, were totally submerged and swept under and out of sight by the tide of rage that rolled up and over their black breasts.

^{*&#}x27;Cept for except.

So confusing and confounding were the shouts, the songs, the jabberings of thick lips, so lurid the glow of their yellow eyes, so powerful the heated emanations from so many bodies, so uneasy and anxious to prevent a disgraceful tragedy, so powerless to act, that Charlmonte and his little party of whites began to feel faint, sick and blind. They staggered against each other and showed a tendency to sink to the ground. They struggled to stand up, and fought to push a way out. They dreaded to drop, lest they should be trampled over by an African herd as remorselessly as if the herd had been buffaloes, instead of men and women.

At this juncture, as it seemed to the five white men, the whole roaring, shouting, moving mob, as it were, was seized by the swift wings of a small cyclone and whirled around and around, until blind, giddy, gasping for breath, suffocated with heat, sick to nausea by the pungent odors peculiar to the black race, deafened by the shouts, the execrations, the white men fell in a heap and lay in a huddle on the grassy ground, stunned, faint, almost insensible. Charlmonte was the first to spring to his feet; the tresh air revived him. The clear vault of heaven was above him, the green trees around—a delicious peace and quiet, coolness and fragrance enveloped them. From Hades they had fallen to Heaven! Charlemonte looked at his companions. There were but three—the prisoner was gone. He understood what had happened. From the distance, in the direction of the sea, came an ominous sound, a dull, recurring Thud! thud! thud!—the sound of five hundred feet tramping on, on, on to

Charlemonte was familiar with every foot of ground on the island. The cyclone had seized the mob at that point in their pathway where the great, broad sea broke upon their vision. Was it the sight of the remorseless waves that roused them to that sudden fury, making them whirl and swirl so swiftly about as to overthrow their central point, seize the man they meant to

destroy, and rush on to the cliff?

the cliff that overhung the fathomless sea!

To fly in the same direction, to fly after those tramping feet, after the sound of those dull, recurring thuds, was the swift impulse of the young Southerner. As he neared the cliff, he saw groups of white men talking excitedly together. The blacks, in a denser crowd, lined the edge of the cliff, talking, shouting, howling like madmen.

"You can't save him! Too late! Too late!" sung out the

big Caucasian.

"Let him die like a dog, as he is!" hallooed another.

But Charlemonte sped on. He arrived in time to hear a despairing cry, and to see a body turning over and over, as it fell through the air, then came a splash in the water, and the poor wretch sunk out of sight. The next moment the man came up, and began a struggle for life. Charlmonte was almost as much at home in the water as a fish. It was the work of a moment to

throw off his outer garments and leap over the cliff, to rescue if he could. A sudden silence fell on the negroes. This was more than they wanted. A swift revulsion swept over them. There was not a negro on the island who did not know and like the young man. He had grown up among them; his frank, generous ways won their applause and affections. At one bound they went back to the feelings of civilization. Springs of sympathy burst forth in their hearts. Some of the women lifted up their voices and wailed aloud. Some of the men began to bestir themselves in search of ways and means of assistance. It happened that one of the field hands, called King John, because of his great size, had a small fishing craft moored under the cliff, hidden in a nook, to keep, as he said, "Dem good-for-nuffin Widgerly niggers from stealin' it." It was King John and the Amazon who had hurled Hillyard into the water. King John held his feet, and the Amazon his head. It was now King John's desire to save his young master. Disappearing down the cliff, King John got in his boat and begun to pull for the two men. It was an exciting scene. The negroes were wrought up to the highest pitch of sympathy and anxiety. Many of the women broke out into fervent prayer, some fell to shouting as if at a camp-meeting, and when at last King John returned to the shore with both men in his boat, their yells and shouts of joy were as loud and fervent as had been their shouts and yells of rage.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MRS. SINGLETON MAKES LOVE TO THE GUSHING WIDOW FOR HER HANDSOME BROTHER.

Mrs. Tubinger amiably and lovingly responded to her friend's little note, and under the escort of her nephew, the talented Blackstone Coke Sharpe, Esq., at an early hour repaired to Mrs. Singleton's residence, radiantly arrayed in pea-green silk, with pink ribbons fluttering here and there. Mr. Sharpe and his affianced went out to a concert, leaving the two widows together. Mrs Singleton had come to the determination to push matters for her brother as fast as possible, feeling quite confident there would be no difficulty on the widow's part, who was so gushingly fervent in praise and admiration of the handsome Arthur, his sister believed that she would marry him at a word. The hardest work Mrs. Singleton had was with her brother; sulking, unwilling, and unreasonable as he too often was, she on her part, was sometimes tempted to give him up and let him slide on to ruin, as certainly he would if left to himself.

Mrs. Singleton apologized for her brother's delay in not coming to them early, on the score of literary labors. She might safely pile any amount of literary charges against her brother, for all Mrs. Tubinger would know. Mrs. Tubinger was no

reader, she never read newspapers or novels, and it never occurred to her to doubt Mr. Arthur's ability to write books, or for the newspapers; she had a rather vague idea on the subject, and only on one point was she quite positive, viz: that it was a wonderful thing to write a book, a mysterious work which she no more comprehended than she comprehended the modus-operandi of the creation of the world. With Mrs. Tubinger it was an immense task to write a letter once in six months, which she did to her three sisters all living in the little village of Canaan-four-Corners. One letter had to do for Sister Sharpe, Sister Blox and Sister Maddox.

Mrs. Singleton, who had a very delicate taste in all matters of toilet, looked at her friend's "loud" costume of pea-green silk and pink ribbons, with a certain pain to her artistic taste, and mentally resolved if ever she was Arthur's wife, that Arthur himself should regulate her wardrobe and tone down its brilliant

coloring.

Looking at the widow with a knowing smile, Mrs. Singleton, with a little mysterious air, said she had seen something in Arthur's writing-table which fairly took her breath away—she never had been so surprised—she never would have had any suspicions in that direction if she had not seen with her own

eyes—she could not doubt, etc., etc.

The jovial widow was all agog to know what her friend had seen—she had no idea what she was talking about, but Mrs. Singleton smilingly shook her head and said she hardly dared tell—Arthur would be furious—Arthur would tell in his own good time, but after a little more hesitation and a good deal of pressing on the part of the curious widow, and after exacting from the widow a solemn promise that she would never, never tell Arthur, Mrs. Singleton said that she had always known that her brother greatly admired a certain lady, but she had never dreamed that it had gone so far as all that signified.

"All what?" questioned the rosy widow, in eager excitement. Then it came out after much hesitation, and still further demands for promises that Arthur should not know that his sister betrayed his secret, it came out that on the day previous she had suddenly gone into her brother's room where he was busily engaged writing his book, and quite without any intention of prying into his secrets—she never dreamed that Arthur had any secrets from her—she took up a sheet of paper and read it,—it

was the dedication page.

"The what?" asked the open-eyed widow, having a rather con-

fused idea of the nature of dedication pages.

"The dedication, my dear, he is going to dedicate his book to the person he most esteems in this world."

"The person?"

"The lady," corrected her friend, smiling knowingly at the gushing Mrs. Tubinger, who turned as red as a peony.

"The ---?" The confused and happy widow was breath-

less with the flood of hope that suddenly swept over her.

"Yes, my dear, it was a lady—and when poor Arthur looked up and saw my astonished face, his turned as red as a rose and

he scolded me fearfully, and—and—and—"

The handsome strategist stammered and hesitated and looked curiously in her companion's face, debating in her mind whether she might still further rely on the widow's credulity, whether she might venture to go on and finish her flattering little romance and get it accepted as solid fact? The blushing, eager face, the open, trusting face decided her.

"Why do you look at me so-so?" asked the joyous relict of the old house-builder, flushing to a deeper red all over her

round, jovial face.

"The name I saw on that dedication page-I declare, Amelia, it quite took my breath away," replied the faithful sister, bravely going on with hypocrisy and deception to enrich her brother. "What name?"

"Oh, if I dared tell-but Arthur would never forgive menever!"

"Oh, do tell! I am dying to know—I'll never breath it to

Arthur. Did—did he dedicate to—to you?"

"No indeed! He does not honor me that much. I always knew that he had a great admiration for the beauty and wit of the lady, but I did not suspect it had gone any further than admiration. I never once suspected that the poor fellow was head and heels in love. That dedication page told the story, poor Arthur was so nicely caught, he could not deny it—he couldn't do anything but blush and scold me."

The widow was radiant, every atom of her body vibrated joyously. Arthur Singleton was her Apollo, her divinity—she had long secretly adored him and was so little exacting as to feed on the common-place politeness he paid her—seasoned with his sister's manufactured praises.

"Do—do I admire the lady?" she asked, making an effort to appear unconscious that she herself was the person indicated.

"You know her, my dear—you know her quite well, but as to admiring her, I can't say that you do-at least, not as much, not half as much as her friends do, not the hundredth part as much as Arthur does. The trouble with me is, I am afraid the lady does not reciprocate Arthur's feelings-he is so diffident when he is in the company of ladies whom he really admires—so timid he never shows off to advantage."

"Oh, you dear old teaser, !" cried the exuberant widow, overflowing with delightful excitement. "I'm sure you might tell

me—I'll keep it as silent as the grave."

"You never will give Arthur a hint?"

"Never!—on my word, never!"

"You see, Arthur intends to surprise the lady—he said to me 'The first she shall know of it, will be when she sees the book.'

Indeed, my dear, you must never let him know that you know he is writing a book."

The widow promised all that was required and waited eagerly

for the information that would set her heart at rest.

Mrs. Singleton told her to go and look in the mirror and she would see the lady to whom the book is dedicated. The widow glowed all over with pride and joy.

"You are jesting—I know you don't mean me?" she said.

"I don't mean any one else. Whom else does Arthur esteem as he does you? If you doubt my word, the very next time I go into Arthur's study, I will steal that dedication and let you see it—that is, if you'll not tell on me."

This dissipated the widow's doubts if she ever had any. was radiantly happy. The idea of having her name in a book! What would people say?—actually printed in a book! She meant to send a copy to each of her sisters in Canaan-four-Corners. Sister Sharpe was a great reader. Sister Sharpe's husband was a lawyer, they read everything—Sister Blox's husband was a farmer, they didn't do any great deal of reading. Maddox wouldn't read anything but the Bible and sermons, but anyhow she meant to send a copy of Arthur's book to each of her sisters just as soon as it came out.

"It is a beautifuly written dedication," remarked Arthur's sister, reflectively, perfectly convinced that the most extravagant romance she could concoct, would pass unsuspected—"a very beautifully written thing, my dear,—so chaste, so respectful. think you must have observed, Amelia, that Arthur is naturally too diffident where he most wishes to please; now with persons to whom he is entirely indifferent, he shows off to a better ad-

vantage, he has no push where he loves."

The widow's memory glanced back on the many evenings she had passed with this gentleman who was so devoted to her, and she was forced to confess that he had not been as pushing as her first wooer, Mr. Tubinger, he certainly had not pushed his case, with that business-like ardor which characterized the old house builder's wooing.

"Timidity," said Arthur's sister, with a sad air, "is always a sign of true love. Arthur is naturally timid, he is full of romance; now with school girls, with Melissa's friends, he is perfectly at home, quite at his ease. He looks upon them as mere

children, but where he feels dceply——"

"Law Cathy!" cried the happy widow. "I really fancied last winter that Arthur was quite taken with that dark-skinned

Island girl."

"What an idea! Arthur particularly dislikes brunettes-(the widow was fair and florid)—he paid some attention to that girl at my earnest wish; the girl's family had been very attentive to me one summer when I met them at Saratoga. I considered it very sweet, very sweet indeed, in Arthur to do the polite at my equest, for I know how tiresome he considers school misses

-so bread and butterish, you know. Arthur likes women of

mind." The widow took all this as matter of fact.

"I very much doubt," resumed Mrs. Singleton, reflectively, "knowing Arthur's timid nature where he really loves, I really very much doubt if he ever gets up the courage to speak out plainly to the woman he adores. I told him that he ought to write. 'If you are too timid to talk, why not write?' I said, 'especially when he writes so beautifully. What do you think of love-letters, my dear? For my part, I'd rather receive a proposal in writing—not embarassing, you know, and gives you time to consider."

The blooming and gushing widow fully agreed to this opinion and this was the point at which Mr. Arthur's sister had been aiming all the evening. She wished to pave the way for a proposal by letter from her brother, as the least obnoxious to his inclinations and the easiest done. Two days from that Mrs. Tubinger received an adoring epistle over the signature "Arthur Singleton," and the engagement was made. Arthur's sister's next move was to procure as short an engagement as possible. Her brother's creditors were becoming aggressively importunate, but Mrs. Tubinger was in no great hurry, one of the chief delights of getting married, in her estimation, was the great number of fine clothes necessary, and the grand display to be made. Mrs. Tubinger couldn't possibly fit herself out properly in less than three months' time.

"My dear Amelia," remonstrated Mrs. Singleton, "really you should consider poor Arthur's feelings. It isn't your trousseau

he wants, my dear, it's yourself."

Mrs. Tubinger was gushingly happy because her Arthur wanted her and not her clothes, but she held to her own way, and had the clothes, all the same. Her very soul reveled in finery. She wrote to her three sisters in Canaan-four-Corners, inviting them and their families to come up to her wedding. She wished both to gratify and astonish her country kin with her grandeur. She was very proud of the handsome, aristocratic appearance of her lover and wanted her sisters to admire him. Mr. Tubinger had been a very good, kind husband, but was not in the least like Arthur; Mr. Tubinger's hands were rough and red, Mr. Arthur's white and smooth; Mr. Tubinger had a red face and red beard, he was broad and stout and short and looked like a respectable workingman as he was, Mr. Arthur was slim and delicate and elegant, and never did a day's useful work in his life. Of course she was extremely proud of this dainty husband, just as men are more fond and proud of the dainty, slim, white-handed girls who never did a useful day's work in their lives, than they would be of girls who roughen their hands with

People make a great clamor about the dignity of labor, yet we see every day of our lives, how laborers are passed by with indifference, and the idlers preferred because these latter bear on After the engagement was made and the first interview over, the chief part of the love-making fell to Mrs. Singleton, who had hard work to keep her brother up to the mark. Too frequently she had to make excuses for his neglect. The book was a ready bulwark to fall back on. Mr. Arthur now and then performed his duty and called on his betrothed; whenever it was possible, he called at such times as she would be at her dress-maker's, or out shopping. Sometimes Mr. Arthur would get the sulks and point-blank refuse to visit his fiancee. His sister saw with secret apprehension that instead of growing more reconciled to the match, more fond of the widow's society, he grew more morose and fretful, and shunned her more than he had done before the engagement.

Mrs. Singleton had serious fears that her friend, trusting and blind as she was by nature, would perceive her lover's reluctance and understand its cause. On one occasion, after a lengthened period of neglect on the part of her intended husband, the widow's brow was rather more serious than usual and Mrs. Sin-

gleton set her wits to work to chase the shadow away.

"He's torn up that first dedication," she said.

"Torn it up! Why?" asked the widow, a shadow of suspicion

on her usually open and cheerful face.

"Yes, my dear," replied Mr. Arthur's sister, affecting not to see the shadow, "he tore it to fragments; he did not like it. It was 'To that most accomplished lady, Mrs. Amelia Tubinger." Now he does not mean to put in 'Mrs. Tubinger."

"He don't?" said the widow with a fallen face.

"No, my dear. Now it is to be, 'To Amelia,—My Beloved wife.' I like it better—so simple! so chaste! But don't give a hint I have told you. He intends it as a surprise—he is going to have your copy bound in royal style. He asked me if I knew which you preferred—red and gold, or blue and gold."

The widow was radiant again.

It is needless to say in the business of wooing, Mr. Arthur

found his sister simply invaluable.

Such was the state of affairs when another short letter came from Roma. This gave the good news that the will was found and the objectionable step-father gone forever, and—at last—consent was given that Mr. Arthur might visit the Island!

This was evidently written before Mr. Arthur's last letter had reached the girl. To describe his state of mind would be simply impossible. True he did not love, or think that he loved, either of those wealthy women, but he immeasurably preferred the

girl

"And to think that I might have had her! What infernal luck follows me! Why, she's worth double as much as this odious widow! Besides she's lady-like, she isn't blowsy and red-handed, she doesn't talk loud and gush on a fellow. Good heavens! Cathy i'ts hard to stand that woman. She flung her-

self at me the other day and popped a resounding kiss on my cheeks before I knew what she was about."

"She's very amiable, Arthur, she'll make you a kind, good

wife."

"Confound the good wife," said Mr. Arthur and stalked out of the room. The next day before she was out of bed, he came to her door.

"Cathy," he said, "I must make a trial for that girl. You yourself said if she invited me to visit her, it was as good as an. acceptance. I must see her; if she'll take me, I'll throw over this frowsy widow."

"But the letter you sent-she will not forgive that, Arthur.

How will you excuse it?"
"How? Yes, I've thought of that. Can I not tell her,—it is true-tell her I can not bear to bring her to poverty. Surely a man may love a woman and be unwilling to marry her if both are poor? What is more common? At any rate I want a trial. she likes me, she'll have me."

"And your present engagement?"

"Let it rest. If I get the girl, the widow'll shut her mouth."
"And if you don't get the girl?"

"I'll marry the widow just as soon as I get back-you can fix up some excuse for my absence—business, etc. Lend me enough money, Cathy, you'll be safe either way. I'll swear to you I'll take one or the other."

CHAPTER XXX.

IS IT LOVE OR IS IT FANCY?

In the happiness of her heart after the happy ending of the great auction day, Roma had written a few lines to Singleton, informing him of the recovery of the will and giving him permission to visit her at Ashcourt at his convenience. She did not tell her mother that he was coming as a suitor for her hand.

"It will be time enough to tell Mama further on," said the girl. I will wait until she sees him and begins to like him, but to tell her now that she has never seen him, will give her a world

of anxiety."

The plantation fell into its old peaceful ways Roma's mother gained strength daily now that she felt herself secure from the interference of the husband she dreaded. That husband, by the consent of all parties, had been pensioned off-a respectable allowance was to be paid him quarterly on condition that he left the State of South Carolina and never again stepped his foot in it. Roma began to busy herself about the negroes, looking after the sick and superannuated the young mothers and the children. The born-lady interested herself more about the health of their souls than their bodies.

One evening as Roma was in her favorite seat that overlooked the sea, indulging in day dreams, in which her handsome lover figured more frequently than any other male or female, she caught a glimpse of Dandy Damon leisurely returning from the village; as he passed, she called him and inquired if he had any letters for her. With his usual affected air, Damon fumbled in his bag and brought up several letters; setting his head knowingly on one side, he scrutinized their superscripstion, and at length presented one to Miss Charlmonte—a square, plain-looking affair, on which her name was dug in heavy black letters. While Roma was looking at this and smiling at the rough chirography which she recognized as Wilmer's, who had not yet returned to the Island, the dandy negro, with Ethiopian grace, presented her a second letter.

"'Pears like, Miss Roma," he said, grinning graciously, "as dis is a oncommon nice letter, hit smells o' vi'lets, hit do."

Yes, it smelt of violets—Roma recognized the faint odor. It was Mrs. Singleton's favorite perfume. She remembered that that lady's handkerchiefs, hair, sables, all emitted the same delicate odor. Yet the writing on the back of the letter was not the lady's writing.

"They are alike," thought the girl, "brother and sister are

alike in their delicate taste."

Roma waited until Damon was almost out of sight before she opened the letter, was it the fear that he might look back and detect her eagerness, her palor, her flushes? She held it in her hand, her heart beating fast—the square, business-looking epistle lay in her lap forgotten. At length, when only the birds around might see her, she opened it and read, and, as she read, a strange change came over her face, a cold, gray palor, her very lips grew bloodless. The letter was short; she read it slowly and then re-read, this time the palor gave place to a flush. was as follows:

My Dear Miss Charlmonte (his other letters began "My Dear Roma"): I am My Dear Miss Charlmonte (his other letters began "My Dear Roma"): I am indeed shocked and deeply grieved at the misfortune that has befallen you. I can the more truly sympathize with you under your trying circumstances as I am myself in a similar condition, that is I have recently met with such heavy losses as will effectually debar me from a course which I had flattered myself would bring me a life-long happiness, I refer, my dear Miss Charlmonte, to the dearest wish of my heart which was to offer you my hand in marriage, the sudden change in my fortune now forbids me. I could not bear the idea of the woman I most esteem and honor (in the other letters it was always "the woman I most love) coming to that poverty which I must myself face and fight. My regard for your happiness is too great to permit of so selfish an act. Wishing you every blessing I remain, Your devoted friend ARTHUR SINGLETON. ARTHUR SINGLETON.

Such were the contents of the violet scented epistle, the other

lay unheeded in her lap.

"I am punished—punished," she said, a few tears gathering to her dark eyes and slowly overflowing, "I should not have forgotten dear old Grandfather's advice, he knew I was not one to. win a real, true love and Wilmer knew-I was a fool and heeded

not my best friends."

The tears of wounded pride flowed down her cheeks. She looked out on the broad sea, she watched the boats skimming the waves and deep down in her young heart were the sadest feelings caused by the thought that she was never destined to win that sweetest love which beauty wins, that love which her Cousins Constance and Charlmonte had found and which beautified and glorified the whole earth. It never occurred to her to blame the man who had proved himself so mercenary she only blamed herself that she had been so easily deceived and she pitied herself as she looked torward to a life of unloved isolation. So deeply was she absorbed in these melancholy thoughts she did not perceive that a pair of earnest, sympathetic eyes were watching and a tall form stood near. Her name was called, she turned and saw Wilmer. Her eyes brightened, the sadness fled, she was very fond of Wilmer's society, mentally he suited her.

"You have just come," she said, "welcome home, we have all

missed you so much."

She made room for him to sit by her side.

"All?" he said gratified at this cordial greeting, "who are the

all ?"

"Why Mama, Dr. Calyx, Cousin Ed especially though I dare say even Miss Keziah and Madam Thebidoux have also missed you only they haven't talked of you as we have."

The traces of tears were yet visible, Wilmer asked if anything

new had occasioned to distress her?

Roma did not immediately reply, she hesitated whether she should or should not let him know that his instincts with regard to Singleton's character were right. Naturally frank, having entire faith in Wilmer's truth and goodness she put the letter in his hand.

"Read that," she said, "and see if it is not enough to cause a

few tears."

Wilmer read with a darkening face then flung it down and ground it under his heel.

"Is is possible," he asked, "that a girl of your sense will weep

for a soulless creature like that?"

He seemed to think the letter was its author and felt toward the irresponsible paper accordingly.

Roma replied that she did not think she wept for him so much

as for herself.

"But why for yourself? you cannot love so contemptible a

man-I will not believe it of you."

Roma seemed to be reflecting, her eyes were fixed on the distant sea, his on her. She musingly replied that she had not loved him—no it was not love but she had begun to think she might some day, yet it was not that which caused her tears it was the memory of what her grandfather had said of her when she was only twelve years old that she was too ugly to be loved as

other girls, that her fortune would wreck her life as it had wrecked her mother's, she now knew it was of her mother's unfortunate marriage her grandfather had spoken, but she did not wish Wilmer to suppose she was repining at her fate, the tears were dried, they could not again fall for such a cause. She had plans for her future life, she meant to find work, she did not intend to

pass an idle existence.

The young man rather indignantly, if not angrily, said that for a girl of her sense, she had more absurd opinions than any other woman he had ever seen; to fancy that Singleton did not love her, because she was not loveable, was, he boldly declared, an absurdity, a folly. A man must feel according to his nature. If it is not in a man's nature to love and admire what is lovely and admirable, he cannot do it, it is an impossibility to him. The mistake lies in those who do not understand his nature, and expect of him what he cannot do, just as it would be a mistake to expect the blind to see. Can a blind man admire the beauties of earth, sky and waters? Some men are afflicted with a moral blindness and are incapable of admiring moral and intellectual worth.

"That man," he said, pointing to the letter ground into the black soil, with a look and tone as if the letter were the man, "that man can love nothing but his own base desires. You ought to rejoice that the will is lost, since its love saves you from him. Poverty of money is not the thousandth part so bad, as poverty of love of affection. That man had no love to enrich

you with."

She admitted he had understood Singleton better than she her-

self had.

"But you did not even reply to my letter, Roma," he said, feeling he had gained a little ground. Her face lighted up.

"How could I reply when I only got it a few moments ago?

See, it is unopened.

She held up the unopened missive that had been delayed by contrary winds or careless officials. He eyed it uneasily.

"And you left my letter unopened to weep over his?"

"There was a look of pain in his face that appealed to her

sympathy.

"You must forgive it, Wilmer," she said, "it will never happen again—that correspondence is ended. I hope you and I will be friends for years. Shall I read it now and answer it on the

spot?"

He was seized with a sudden fear, he took it out of her hands and was about to tear it up, only the most earnest protest prevented. Then he gave it back and walked away, leaving her alone—yet not alone, for he had poured out his very soul in that letter, and he waited with a gloomy brow there by the water's brink to know his fate. She told him she would call him after she had read it. But she did not call, she sat silent as a statue, but for her, the whole world was changed. What magic wand

had moved over the universe? Why were the heavens so vast and beautiful and blue? Why was the sunshine so bright and the trees so green and the ocean so grand? Why did all Nature seem to radiate life and loveliness? A moment before all the world wore a sombre, common-place hue; why? Because she had returned to the old belief which had more or less annoyed her for six years, that she was too plain, too unattractive to win that sort of love young girls dream of, that love which warms and roseates the whole world. And now—now that idea was killed at a blow, here was an ocean of the truest, the deepest, the most ardent love poured out at her feet. She could not doubt it. The date of the letter was that of the great auction sale—the writer was in ignorance of the strange events of that day, perhaps was still in ignorance, as he had just landed on the Island. Wilmer not only told of the great and ardent love with which she had inspired him, but he told her she was the only woman for him in the wide world, that had he the power to create a woman, he would mould her, mind and body, like Roma Charlmonte; he told her if she cast him off, if she utterly refused his love, he would be desolate, forever desolate, for there were no more Romas in the world. He also told her that he never could have presumed to offer his love and his life to her, had she remained the heiress, but now--

It was in the second reading of this stirring epistle, just at the point indicated, that Roma looked up at the sound of footsteps.

Wilmer stood before her, stern and grave.

"You would not call me. Am I not, at least, worthy of an answer?" he asked.

"This is a great surprise to me. I never dreamed of this," she said, musingly, rather than in reply to him.

"I saw you did not—is it a shock, as well as a surprise?" "You would never have told me had the will been found?"

"I had bidden myself keep silent. A man's feelings, however, sometimes get the better of his judgment."

"His-judgment?"

"Yes; would it have been wise and well for a poor devil like myself to aspire to the hand of a great heiress?"

"Singleton did." "Ah-127

The interjection was exceedingly significant. It seemed to scorn a comparison between himself and her former suitor.

"I hope," he said, after a little pause, "that it is not all sel-fishness in me which makes me rejoice that the will is lost. Every time I think of that man and the possibility that you would have married him, I thank Heaven you are left penniless."

"Yes," said Roma, thoughtfully, "I feel with you it is better the will was lost. I am reconciled to what has happened."

"Poverty is not the worst evil on earth," he rejoined. can fight poverty and gain on it each day, little by little we can overcome it. But domestic misery, a discordant unlovely home, is a hell on earth. It is amazing to me how any man, whose tastes and opinions impel him to make a choice between women, should marry for money. We only want money to purchase for ourselves the luxuries and necessities of life. The greatest luxury on earth is congenial companionship-when tied to an uncongenial person for life, though possessed of the wealth of a Cresus, we are debarred from securing for ourselves the companionship we most desire."
"Possibly," said Roma, "those who only seek money in mar-

riage have but little choice in women. One woman will please

them about as well as another."

"However that may be," said Wilmer, "I am very decided in my tastes. I want a wife exactly after your pattern, Roma, and if you will not take me, I shall give up the idea of marriage, for I know I will never find one like you."

"But," said Roma, laughingly, "does it not strike you, Wil-

mer, as a little comical, as well as unwise to-to-"

"Well, what is unwise? What is comicial?" he said, possessing himself of the hand that lay idly in her lap. "I see nothing unwise in loving you to death—provided you tell me I am not hateful to you—utterly hateful. Tell me! Tell me! Tell me!"

And he kissed her hand rapturously. She drew it away.

"Surely Wilmer, you do not expect me to listen to a second proposal the very minute you found me weeping over the termination of the first? Besides, are you not afraid to risk marriage with a girl so illy-trained to be a poor man's wife?"

"A girl of your sense can easily adapt herself to humble fortunes,-but you never could adapt yourself to an unworthy, an ignoble nature. If you can only give me one-half as much love

as I give you, Roma, I will be content for the present."

"But not for the future?"

"Oh, no; I shall study to win more. I believe I can win your heart, Roma, now that false, yet handsome man is out of the way."

"You have not asked me anything about the auction yet? You

have not heard, have you?"

"Nothing since I left; I just landed an hour ago, and came

straight on to you."

"Are you not a little interested in the fate of the poor negroes? Sit down and I will tell how that wretched auction went off."

"Did he sell any of the house servants—any of your especial favorites?"

"Uncle Tally, Thetty, Damon. Oh, he was very cruel."
Wilmer was duly sympathetic, he hoped they had fallen into good hands. Then Roma told him how her uncles had made up a purse and had a bidder there to buy Tally, Thetty and Damon. The field hands were knocked down to the traders.

Wilmer's grave face and sympathy and perfect faith in

the validity of the sale, I am sorry to say, struck Roma, in her present happy, light-hearted mood, in rather a ludicrous light. She felt an inclination to break out in smiles, to beam joyously, yet to keep up the play a little longer, she endeavored to preserve a grave and decorous face. In spite of her efforts, Wilmer caught the light in her eyes, the gayety like sunshine ready to burst out. He looked at her so intently, so inquiringly, she could no longer resist the impulse to laugh out, which she did frankly. Wilmer was first astonished, then wounded.

"What does this mean?" he asked, with a stern face. "If what I have said only excites mirth, I may as well bid you good-

bye."

He strode away again to the water's brink. Roma was sobered in a moment. She ran down and begged his pardon, said she had not meant to wound him, there was not a man on earth she

more respected.

"Confound respect!" he blurted out, impatiently. "I have not asked for your respect, no one can refuse me respect. Any negro can respect me. I have poured out my soul to you and you laugh in my face."

"I did not laugh at you. You do not understand. The situa-

tion is dramatic. I laughed—it—it made me happy."

"It-what made you happy?"

"The way things turned out. The sale ended so differently from all expectation."

"How different?"

"The sale was stopped."

"Why-by whom?"

"Cousin Ed. discovered it was illegal. The man had no right."

"No right?"

"None in the world. The will was found." "Then-you-are-the heiress of Ashcourt?"

"Now, is that kind? Instead of congratulating me, you look the very tone of your voice seems as if you feel that a great misfortune has befallen me."

"A great misfortune has befallen me—if you are set up so high

beyond my reach, Miss Charlmonte."

"Miss Charlmonte! Is that kind? Why should this thing make any difference between friends?"

"But we are not friends. I do not ask your friendship-friend-

ship will not satisfy me. Oh, Roma!"

He uttered the name with a groan. "I do not now wonder that you laughed. No wonder you find it amusing—had I known, I would not have made myself so ridiculous as to propose to Miss Charlmonte, the heiress."

"You wish to withdraw your proposal, then?"

He made no reply, his eyes were bent gloomily on the ground. "I think it very unkind," she said, suppressing a smile at the desperately lugrubrious looks of her lover—"very unkind to deprive me of the only genuine offer I ever had, or ever may have."

"An offer you laugh at."

"I have not laughed at the offer, I laughed at the mistake you made."

"An offer you disdain to notice one way or the other."

"An offer I do not disdain, an offer I respect and appreciate, an offer I value as sincere and true and unselfish, as coming from a sincere and unselfish heart. But do you really think, Wilmer, I ought to begin—even to begin to consider another proposal on the same day you caught me crying over the disgraceful termination of the first? You, yourself would despise me for such fickleness."

"It would not be fickle—you did not love that man. I know love when I see it; you only thought you might possibly love him. You are not fickle, on the contrary you will prove as steadfast as the poles, when you once truly love. I do not ask if you love me now. I know too well you do not. All I ask is, if you feel that you never can love me, to let me know it; if you feel that you may in time love me, let me know it. The bare hope will lighten and brighten the world."

When they parted, somehow he had that hope, and when the girl entered her mother's room and kissed that pale, but now, placid face, she was fondly patted on the cheek and bidden to walk out every day, exercise was giving her a lovely color.

"And color is very becoming to you, dear," said that fond

mother, looking admiringly on her girl.

Roma glanced at her reflection in the mirror and thought she was not so very—very ugly after all.

"Some people," she said, gayly, to herself, "are so stupid,

stupidly blind, they can not or will not see the ugliness."

Then she asked for Madame Thebideaux and was told she was gone to read the Bible to aunt Dinah. Miss Keziah was serenely occupied with some sort of sewing. She sewed from habit now that the necessity no longer existed.

"What a good Christian the Madame is," said Roma, settling herself on a stool at her mother's feet and nestling her head in her lap, "and I must tell you, Mama, Wilmer is come back. I do not think, Mama, that Wilmer is quite as good a Christian as you would like to have him—he is a little too—skeptical—sometimes!"

Did she say this just because she liked to talk to her mother of the young man? She had known of his skeptical nature before to-day, yet had never thought to speak of it to her mother.

That good lady was alarmed. In her opinion a skeptic

was in a most dangerous state.

"Oh, I hope not—I hope not!" she said, looking as if Roma had said she feared he had the small-pox or the yellow-fever.

"I am afraid he is," said the girl, "I think he ought to see

what religion has done for Madame Thebideaux; he ought to look at her case, Mama."

"He ought to read the Bible more," said the gentle Keziah.
"Blair's sermons will bring him round," said Roma's mother.
"If anything can bring him to repentance, Blair's sermons will.
Remind me, Roma, dear, the next time he comes, to ask him to read them."

CHAPTER XXXI.

SINGLETON VISITS THE ISLAND.

Two wedding cards passed each other on the mail route, the one going North, the other coming South, the latter invited the two Island girls to the marriage of Miss Melissa Mopson and Mr. Blackstone Coke Sharpe, Esq., the former invited Mrs. and Mr: Singleton and Miss Melissa Mopson to the marriage of Miss Constance Ashford and Mr. Edward Charlmonte, Esq.; as both these weddings were to be celebrated near the same time neither party could accept. It is not our purpose to give any detailed account of these two weddings, suffice it there was the usual display of white silk and orange flowers, and youth and beauty, both were love matches and both loves had run as smooth as a summer's dream, all four, for the time being, felt quite certain that they had taken a step that would establish their life-long happiness, time will show how far they were right. Wilmer did not make very rapid progress in his wooing, there were times when he imagined that the girl he loved was perfectly indifferent to him, at other times he feared that she had been more deeply interested in Singleton than at first he had been willing to believe. At the wedding, fancying that she was unusually thoughtful, even sad, he ventured to refer to it.

"Roma you are not thinking of that man?"

"What man?" looking around as if startled from a reverie.
"The pretender, the handsome, smooth, selfish pretender—

you do not—love him."

"Love him! I think not, I was thinking of Conny and Ed, how absolutely happy they are. It is not often that we see two persons who have exactly what they want, and all they want—Ed and Conny have."

"Sometimes," said the young man in a low, tender tone, "sometimes I fear that your imagination was more impressed—I

will not believe it was your heart—than you will admit."

"No," she said brightening up, "I do not think there are any grounds for that fear. I have a tremendous idea of love, I fancy it must be the one grand, absorbing, if crossed, tragic and destroying passion, wrecking one's life, wrenching one's heart out of one's breast, now do I look as if I had endured all that? why

Mama said only this morning that I was really growing rosy and and fat—imagine a wrecked and wretched girl growing fat!"

Wilmer smiled down with a yearning tenderness on the slender, fawn like form, and although he could not perceive any strong tendency toward fatness, the gay manner pleased him and set his heart at rest. He had gotten over his stiffness toward the heiress, after the first momentary fit, he justly considered that to give up a woman he adored because she happened to possess a fortune would be a folly. Roma saw very little society, she had not yet laid aside mourning, consequently there was no rival to give Wilmer uneasiness, he had the field to himself. The reception of the following note angered and alarmed him no little.

I think I told you, on that first day of your return when you read that letter, that it was in reply to the one I had written informing Mr. S. that the will could not be found, consequently that Mama and I were reduced from affluence to poverty. Did I not also tell you that before that answer came I sent another letter informing him that the will was found, and our troubles ended, and at the same time giving him permission to pay a visit to our Island and Ashcourt? Well, he has come! he is at the village inn and has sent me a note asking an interview. As I had invited him to come to Ashcourt I feel bound to receive him hospitably, so have persuaded Mama to send him an invitation to spend three days at Ashcourt, from next Wednesday to the following Saturday, at the same time I sent a note regreting that my engagements would not permit me to receive him at an earlier time than Mama mentioned. As we do not wish this traveled gentleman to find Ashcourt dull, we shall ask Conny and Cousin Ed to give us their charming company for those three days, and dear old Miss Susan is already here. You are a great favorite of Miss Susan's, she admires your wisdom, but you must be careful not to shock her with your heretical views. Miss Susan does not like controversy on theological subjects, she cannot see why every human does not think exactly as she does on religious questions. Our old neighbor Mr. Widgerly, whom you have not yet seen, has returned from a prolonged visit to his daughter in Tennessee will also be with us. Mama particularly requests you to give us as much of your valuable time as you can. You will have your same room next to the one Dr. Calyx occupies—I mention this as an inducement, I know how fond you and he are of discussions.

Your truly,

"What infinite depths of self-conceit must a fellow possess to seek a girl after writing such a letter as that fellow wrote! Confound his impudence! I'd like to get a chance to kick him!" was Wilmer's outburst. Then he swore he would not go near the house while the fellow was in it, he did not wish to see him, he did not wish to speak to him. Why was the fellow invited? He could see no necessity; necessity, indeed! the man should not be allowed to step his foot in the house. Feeling thus Wilmer seized the first opportunity to go to Ashcourt to tell Roma that he would not come. He found Roma and her mother with a visitor, a little, lively old man, with a bald head, and a thin fringe of red, curling hair around the base of it. This little, lively old man, their neighbor Mr. Widgerly, was descanting in the most cheerful way on the loneliness of Widgerly Place, not a white woman in the

house, nobody to pour his coffee, nobody to get his slippers and turn down the bed clothes when he wanted to go to bed. Mr. Widgerly was a widower of many years standing, as long as his daughters were with him he got on very well, now he declared he could no longer endure his solitary life, he meant to find a wife as soon as possible. Roma asked how old must the lady be? Her mother wanted to know if she meant to apply for the place?

"No, no!" replied the girl, "I know Mr. Widgerly would not have me, but I do know a lady who will just suit. How old,

Mr. Widgerly, must the lady be?"

"Anywhere, my dear, from forty to sixty-five—I am seventy, I must have her a little younger than I am or I may find myself

a widower again."

"Then we can suit you, we have the nicest, nicest old lady of sixty-five, you shall see her when you come Wednesday. Oh! I know you will immediately ask her to become the mistress of

Widgerly Place."

"Who on earth do you mean, Roma?" asked her mother astonished at the high spirits of the girl. Roma saw and felt the change in Wilmer, the stern, reproachful look, and read aright the cause, she knew he had come to scold her about Singleton, why should he scold? Did he distrust her? Could he possibly think she could be cajoled by the man again? These thoughts excited her and set her to talking in that way.

"Whom do I mean? Mama do you not know? There is but one Miss Susan in the world, Miss Susan Stokes. Mr. Widgerly I feel confident she will have your slippers always ready, and put the precise quantity of cream in your coffee, and turn the cover down the moment, you feel sleepy. I beg you, Mr. Widgerly, do not propose to any one else until you have seen our Miss Su-

san."

The little old man agreed and soon after took his departure.

"Mama," said the girl still in that unusual state of excitement "I feel a presentiment that we shall have a romance, a real romance, a grand love affair, and then how charming their ages! they suit so well, she sixty-five, and he five years older just the right difference between a man and a woman."

Wilmer sarcastically remarked that he did not know Miss

Charlmonte meant to set herself up as a match-maker.

"Oh, I'm not going into the business generally," she replied, pleasantly, appearing not to observe his dark looks, "but this particular case is too tempting. Here is Miss Susan taking rest for the second time in her life; Conny and I brought her down to give her a long holiday We did not think at the time how dreadful it would be for her to go back to that little garret room which looks out on the roofs of houses, and set down to stitch—stitch—stitch from morning until midnight. I know she dreads it, only she is too cheerful to say so, and but this morning she

said it was time she was going back, idleness was spoiling her, and Mama told her there was no need for her to go back, she could find enough to employ herself on the Island if she felt like work."

"I'm sure—we are glad to have her," said Roma's mother. "She's a very nice old lady—she need not work unless she likes

to; but as to marrying, my dear, she's too old."

"She is not as old as Mr. Widgerly. Why, Mama, it is the age that makes it lovely. Any day can furnish young lovers, my lovers will be out of the common. I do hope you will approve Mama. Mr. Wilmer looks as if he meant to oppose, perhaps he has hopes of Miss Susan, himself."

Mrs. Charlmonte left the room and the scolding began.

"Why did you invite that man here after that insulting letter?"
Roma did not think the letter insulting, or intended to be insulting. The letter she had sent him, invited him to visit Ashcourt. She felt bound to receive him hospitably.

"But three days—three whole days! Why, after that I dare say he would like to put up at the village inn for a month or

two and come over every day,"

"Of course," replied she, beamingly. "Where can he find a

lovelier place than Ashford Isle to idle in a month?"

"The impudence of the man! The intolerable, insulting impudence! In effect, it is saying that he thinks you weak enough to pocket his insult, and take him whether he wants you, or your money. I came to—thank your mother for her kind invitation and to—decline!"

"Decline? Pray, why?

"It will be too disagreeable to be under the same roof with

that man, unless I had the privilege of-kicking him."

"No; you cannot have that privilege in Ashcourt, besides he is a very courteous, and a very handsome gentleman, and has never wronged you. You must treat him politely. Mama will be disappointed if you do not come; we have such an odd set of people with us, the Calyxes and Madame Thebideaux, and Miss Susan, that we cannot invite our city friends, they would not harmonize, the Calyxes go away in a week. By the way, Cousin Ed and I have agreed to donate five thousand each, to the INEBRIATES' CURE, that Calyx intends to establish in New York. Madame Thebideaux is to serve as matron—so you must come."

"Do you wish it?"

":Would I ask you if I did not?"

"But you have asked the other man also. Did you also wish him to come?"

"Certainly."

"Then I stay away. Besides it would be dangerous to have me here. Some fine morning your handsome guest might fail to put in his appearance, and when you sent to his room, a coroner's inquest might be in demand." Notwithstanding all opposition, the young man finally pledged himself to be on hand.

When Mr. Arthur read the two notes, Roma's and her mother's, the latter inviting him to come to Ashcourt for three days, the other excusing herself for not seeing him immediately, they greatly puzzled his brain. He had expected either to be well received or repulsed with resentment. This politeness, yet indifference, he could not understand.

"She is not offended—that is sure," he said to himself, "were she offended, she would not ask me for three days, but why put

off seeing me?"

He was to go to Ashcourt on Wednesday, it was Sunday when the note came. Why did she—Roma, not see him at once? What was he do with himself in all that intervening time? He wished for his sister—Cathy would know exactly what it meant. After puzzling his brains trying to understand the mysteries of the female mind, he resolved to hire a sail-boat and sail along the coast to kill time. After that excursion, he rested himself, read a movel and then wrote to his sister the following letter:

Ashford Isle, November 21st, 18—.

My Dear Cathy:—Here I am on this confounded Island, lodged in a confounded little room in a village of a hundred or so people, most of them market gardeners and fishermen. I feel as if I were entirely outside of the world, among an outlandish people, and I don't know what to think of the way I am treated. I wish you were here to give me your opinion of affairs. I have not yet seen Roma. I wrote as you advised, the first thing after landing, requesting an interview. Two very polite notes came in reply, one from the young lady, the other from the old. The latter invited me to Ashcourt for three days, the former said she regretted that she could not see me before the time mentioned by her mother. Is not this odd? What does it mean? Is she sulking at me on account of that last letter? Or has she the good sense of a woman of the world? Does she recognize the fact that a gentleman in my position can not marry without money? Do you think it possible that she never got that letter? I would give a good sum to know. If she never got it, I think all will be plain sailing. The more difficulties in the way, the more I am urged on; her fortune is immense; she is a bigger prize than the widow; the man who went sailing with me sets her down for at least five hundred thousand, and the best thing about it she is absolutely her own mistress,—there is no guardian, and no division. What a trump she is! I shall work hard to win her,—but what an odd thing to put me off three days! How did she suppose I could get through these three days in this abominable little fishing village? However, to-morrow at four P.M. I am expected. They lunch at twelve and dine at five. I shall keep you posted. Answer this at once. It may happen that I shall have to remain longer than I had anticipated, but the prize is worth the time and trouble. Are you bothered by the damned trades people?

Your affectionate brother,
ARTHUR SINGLETON.

At four on the appointed Wednesday, the guests began to assemble in the large Ashcourt drawing room. Constance, who had not seen Roma since the arrival of Singleton, went to her chamber with an anxious face.

"Roma, dear, why is that man here?"

"What man, my darling?"

"You know very well that I mean Mrs. Singleton's brother."
"Oh! I have not seen him yet; perhaps he will inform me when he comes."

"Roma, you know why he comes. You are not candid."

"I think—I do not know, I would not like to swear it before a court of justice, but I think he comes to see me."

"And pray, who told him he might come? Is it not rather

bold to push himself on our Island in this way?"

"Would you call it bold if I invited him?"

"Oh! has it come to that? Oh! has it gone that far?" wailed her cousin, the tears starting into her lovely eyes. "What does Aunt Caroline say about it? Is Aunt Caroline willing? Oh, Roma! Roma!"

"Why should not Mama be willing?" replied Miss Roma. "I told her that his sister was very kind and attentive to us when we were in New York. Mama, of course, thought it behooved

her to show some appreciation.

Now, Conny, dear, I am dressed; I want you to come with me to Miss Susan's room. I mean to dress Miss Susan in style."

Roma explained her plans with regard to Mr. Widgerly and Miss Susan, but her cousin was too anxious to take much interest.

"Miss Susan, Conny and I have come to be your maids. We

mean to make you lovely."

"My dears, I have on my very best dress and cap; I can't do

any better."

She was a tall, slim, white-faced old lady; mild and placid in appearance, with a nose and chin showing a friendly desire to get near to each other. Her dress was of some soft gray woolen stuff, her cap white, and her white hair parted over her pale forehead. Roma brought white lace and black lace, and pale purple ribbons, and by a tasteful arrangement of these ornamental articles, she transformed the respectable looking sewing woman into a lady-like looking person. Miss Susan had a natural air of refinement.

"Please yourselves, dears," she said, smiling, as the young fingers put a touch here and there. "I'm sure it's all like a dream down here any way—for forty years no one has ever

cared how I looked, and I have not had time to care."

Roma stepped back to get a good view of the effect. "She looks like a picture, Conny," she said, admiringly, "quite like a picture of some of the old French countesses we used to see in New Orleans."

"Or one of the old nuns or saints we saw in the Cathedral," said Conny, her pretty head on one side, as she critically con-

templated the smiling old lady.

"Miss Susan has as good a right to be a saint as any nun in the world," said Roma, proud of the improvement she had wrought. "Saint of the Needle we might call her, or Sister of Perpetual Toil—either would suit her." "No, no, my dears, I am only a poor sinner. I feel that the Lord has been very good to me, my dears, very good. I have never had, o beg my bread, thank Heaven! I have always been able to earn my living. I am very thankful."

Dr. Calyx had become quite a favorite with Roma's mother; his mesmeric power, she thought, relieved the nervous pains and spasms to which she was liable, brought on by the terrible trials

she had endured since her father's death.

It was chiefly on her mother account that Calyx prolonged his stay beyond the time originally intended. When Roma and Miss Susan entered the drawing room, Calyx and her mother were conversing together, Miss Calyx and Madam Thebideaux sat side by side calm and serene, now and then exchanging a whispered word. The latter lady had her strip of cambric in hand, industriously stabbing it with the little ivory stiletto, making little holes which she worked around under the impression that she was converting the cambric into an ornamental piece of embroidery.

We wish some philosopher would consider this question. What change would it have made in the condition of women, therefore of humanity itself, had women never fallen into the mania for embroidery? There is no telling the centuries and centuries ahead of what we now are, we might be, had woman's

time been better employed.

There is no telling the number of lives that have been stitched into embroideries; there is no telling the number of aches and pains, the dyspepsias, failing eyes and weak spines for which embroidery is responsible. When Madam Thebideaux was not praying and exhorting, she was embroidering. She was not fond of reading—never read any but religious newspapers, and those from a sense of religious duty. She considered all political and secular papers as vehicles of sin, leading to worldliness of mind.

Roma presented the Sister of Perpetual Toil to the little old gentleman who was on the watch eager for her entrance. He bobbed up to meet her and greet her with the cheeriest of smiles, and the cheerfulest of bows; his little old head breaking out in benevolent moisture, as he beamed upon the ladies. Mr. Widgerly was in evening attire, a swallow-tail coat, white vest with gold buttons, and a button hole boquet.

"He really looks quite bride-groom like," thought the young lady, as he walked off, Miss Susan's arm comfortably and tightly tucked into his, and placed her on a sofa in a corner, and him-

self by her side.

Roma, Ed Charlmonte and his lovely bride formed a group in the center of the room, around a table on which lay some fine engravings, when Dandy Damon in all the glory of a blue broadcloth, swallow-tail coat, crimson waist-coat, and white gloves, and shining wool piled on top of his sugar-loaf shaped head, announced with a loud voice:

"Mr. Arter Singleton, New Yark."

Roma met her guest with smiling cordiality and extended hand, welcoming him to Ashcourt. Singleton was looking remarkably handsome and happy. Roma's greeting put him at ease, the fears which had haunted him that she resented his last letter, that she would meet him haughtily or coldly, were dissipated in a flash. After asking about his sister's health, Roma proposed to present him to her mother.

"Mama will receive you like an old friend," she said, pleasantly. "Mama has heard so much of you from Conny and me, she

feels very grateful to your sister for her kindness to us.

"Mama permit me to present to you Mr. Singleton." They had crossed the floor and were standing in front of Mrs. Charlmonte's sofa. Mrs. Charlmonte was languidly conveying to Calyx her views on the subject of original sin, and the best method of overcoming it. Calyx rose and gave way to the new comers. Mrs. Charlmonte greeted him with the friendliest smile, and offered him a place at her side. Singleton's first thought was how beautiful she must have been! His next—but the next was driven to utter and everlasting oblivion. Cold iron seemed to be running down his spinal column, succeeded by hot flashes as if on fire within, and the flames were about to burn out through every pore. His eyes had met a serene pair of blue orbs which seemed to be contemplating him with a mild and calm curiosity. Apparently satisfied, the blue eyes fell to the sewing in her hand, and the owner continued to stab little holes and stitch around them as unconcernedly as if in the person of Singleton she saw an entire stranger. Not so with the gentleman, he sat down there within three feet of the one woman in the world whose presence he most disliked. He could not get rid of the thought that every word he uttered would reach her ears. Meanwhile the cold and hot flashes afflicted his spine, his handsome face was pale, his contenance betokened agitation; all his graceful self-possession was put to flight.

Roma observed the agitation, and attributed it to anything but the right cause. Walking away, she left him with her mother. "Why is she here?" was the question that tormented Single-

ton's mind as he tried to appear interested in the gentle remarks

of the lady by his side.

"Why and how came she here? She, the street vagabond, the drunkard, the outcast—unworthy to enter a decent house." Then his thoughts reverted to the change in her appearance—the change for the better. What had wrought this change? What had brought back the freshness of youth, the appearance of innocence? Her manners had the quietness and self-confidence of the woman who respects herself, and is respected by others. The sight of this woman confused and confounded him. It was with difficulty he could listen and reply sensibly to his beautiful hostess.

When dinner was announced, he took Mrs. Charlmonte in and

sat by her side; he had hoped that Roma would fall to his care. Wilmer's face grew radiant as he saw that Roma was left to him.

"This is indeed good," he said, as they followed the rest. "I hardly hoped, indeed I feared that you might fancy it behooved

you to honor him."

"Have I not? Is it not honor to escort the lovliest woman in the State. Have I not allotted him to my mother? Do I not

honor him more than all others?"

It was a delightful party for all save one; poor Singleton's joy was turned to gall by the presence of the woman introduced to him as Madam Thebideaux. The silent serenity of this lady, her great calm, watchful blue eyes, exerted a peculiarly unhappy effect on the handsome Arthur. She sat directly facing him; he could not avoid her eyes, their satisfied serenity irritated and annoyed him. He would have been far better pleased had she also felt confused, had she been ashamed to meet his eyes, or had she appeared to be conscious that she was out of place in a respectable house.

All this Mr. Arthur thought he should have felt, and none of this, she seemed to feel. It was unnatural; he could not un-

derstand it.

"Confound her impudence!" he thought. "It really seems as if she is looking down on me, as if I were the one out of place."

Roma had a sweet voice and sang simple ballads in a way that charmed Wilmer, but Singleton's cultivated ear detested ballads. He liked Italian music, operatic airs, etc. Roma had discovered during her visit to Singleton's sister that her singing did not please him, and she had given up singing in his presence, yet now at Wilmer's request she went to the piano and sang all the old ballads he called for, as much to Wilmer's pleasure as to Singleton's annoyance.

"The country bumpkins!" said the accomplished gentleman to himself, as he eyed Wilmer standing by the piano. "Why does he not provide himself with a hand organ and grind out his own music? It would exactly suit his ear. Blaine's girl can really

sing."

The next moment "Blaine's girl" was asked to take Roma's place at the piano. When Singleton saw the Blaine girl, who, by all the customs and laws of civililized society, ought at that moment to have been kicked out in the street as unfit to breathe the air of respectable homes—when he saw her, calm, self-poised, serene, without a blush, without a tremor to show that she felt her unworthiness, walk up to the instrument and sweep over its keys her large white fingers, he began to think he had fallen into a strange and troubled dream, from which he would presently awake and find himself in real life once more.

"Will she sing the old songs I once begged her to sing?" was his thought; "the old, passionate love songs that once so stirred my blood? How could he listen to the languid lady by his

side? How shut his ears from the sounds, his eyes from the sights, his memory from the thoughts?" He was perplexed and amazed. Miss Keziah, who sat near the piano, softly whispered a request to the "Blaine girl" to sing her favorite hymn. Singleton's straining ear heard the request. He eyed the little mild creature as if she were an odd sort of animal. "What a strange menagerie of beasts this girl gathers about her," was his reflection, and he further thought that as soon as he had control of her and her affairs, her drawing room would assume a different aspect.

Meanwhile, the "Blaine girl's" face assumed a reverential expression; her eyes rolled up toward the ceiling, she lifted her voice, that full, clear, silvery voice, and sang a Methodist hymn. Miss Keziah's favorite, the one that had consoled her through all her trials and tribulations, through the pinchings of poverty, through the scorn, indifference, or contempt of the rich and the

proud:

"When I can read my title clear To mansions in the skies, I'll bid farewell to every fear, And wipe my weeping eyes."

And so on through a dozen verses, to the blank amazement and torture of the sensitive and fastidious gentleman who had cultivated his taste in the operatic schools of Europe. Mr. Widgerly and Miss Susan, who were also Methodists, were earnest in their praises; with a little encouragement from the mistress of the house, they would have utilized the occasion and turned it into a prayer meeting. Never had our handsome and fastidious friend spent a more uncomfortable evening. once did he find a chance for a private word with Roma, who flitted about, apparently in the happiest spirits, neither seeking or shunning him, and when they parted for the night, her dark eyes beamed on him in so friendly a way, he went up to his room with a feeling of confidence that all things crooked in his affairs would be straightened on the morrow. How he fared in the effort to "straighten matters" may as well be told in his own words, as he related it to his sister on the following night in the following letter:

Ashcourt, November 23d, 18—.

Dear Cathy:—If I was in a peck of trouble and a bushel of doubts, when I last wrote, I am now in tons and tons both of troubles and perplexities. Everything down here on this confounded Island is so different from our ways, that sometimes I'm half convinced that it's all a dream and there is no reality about it. Confound me if I can understand anything or any person. These people are only half-civilized. They know nothing of the forms of good society; yet, in a certain way, they live grandly enough. Such a set of odd fish as Roma has gathered into her house, you never saw in all your life among people who make any pretensions to good society. Then, the conduct of the girl herself is a puzzle. I can't make out what she's up to; she received me with great cordiality, that is certain. She presesented me to her mother in the friendliest way. (By the way, if her mother had the money, I don't

know but that I would prefer her to the daughter. She's a confounded sight the best looking. and wouldn't be so set up in her own ideas.) Nothing could be better than the way both ladies treated me. I began to feel quite safe, quite certain that she was not offended, and hoped that she never had got that devilish letter which you made me write, but—and here comes the aggravating part of the whole business; she seemed to have forgotten that I had ever made love to her. I did not once get a chance to say a word in private, but I could cast meaning glances, and, by the Lord, Cathy! I might as well have looked love at the dog irons, for all the effect it seemed to have Lord, Cathy! I might as well have looked love at the dog irons, for all the effect it seemed to have. She positively did not appear to know what I was at; just rattled on in the pleasantest way, talking to all, and on everything that came up. She has greatly improved since you saw her, is more womanly, more graceful and easy in manners; but—and here comes in the mysterious puzzle. Whom do you suppose I found staying here as a guest?—actually a guest, apparently on terms of perfect equality with the ladies of the house? Blaine's girl, that creature I saw in the streets of New York a few months ago; a drunken outcast. It is a mystery to me how she came into this house, how she has gotten up from the dreadfully low state she had sunken to. To look at her now you could hardly believe that she had ever been a vagabond of the worst stripe. She has become extremely pious; prays and sings with the nestripe. She has become extremely pious; prays and sings with the negroes, teaches Sunday-school, and, if asked to sing, lifts up her splendid voice in such things as:

> "Hark! from the tombs a doleful sound, Mine ears attend the cry; Come all ye sinners, view the ground, Where ye must shortly lie."

And this is the sort of singing Roma permits to the torture of civilized When I left the drawing room last night we parted in so friendly a way, I thought I would surely be able to get a word in private to-day. I have not succeeded; not that she shuns me, but that others are always about me. Those abominable blacks make continual demand on her time and attention. The house is full of the most absurd old maids you ever saw, and strange as it may seem, Roma appears to delight in their society. If I am ever master of this castle, there'll be a grand revolution. When I went down to breakfast this morning, Mrs. Charlmonte invited me to sit next to her, which put me also next to her daughter.

'Yes, do, Mr. Singleton,' said the latter, brightly, 'I saved this place for you; if you are handy and good-natured, you may help me pour the coffee."

So I sat between the mother and daughter, well pleased at the progress I was making and would have been better, but for that outragious Blaine girl who sat directly in front of me, her great eyes now and then fixed on me in a way I did not like. Confound me, Cathy! if she doesn't look for all the world, exactly as if I were the one out of place and imposing myself on a respectable family;—that's the impudence of such creatures. self on a respectable family;—that's the impudence of such creatures. I long to divulge her true character to the people on whom she imposes by her affectation of piety, but hardly dare to, lest she should have the audacity to make accusations of one sort or other against mc. After breakfast, Roma proposed a horseback darty to show me the Island and the best sea-views. I acceped gladly, thinking I would find my opportunity for a private word. The horses were out by eleven o'clock. Charlmonte and his pretty wife, the two cub-doctors, who seem to be at home in this house, though, for what earthly reason I can't see, the Blaine girl, myself and Roma made np the party. I wondered that Roma did not insist on the two old mummy maids, Miss Stokes and Miss Calyx, going with us. I suppose they would have done so, had they been able to sit on with us. I suppose they would have done so, had they been able to sit on a horse and hold the bridle. However, off we started. Now I had certainly counted on riding with Roma. Did I do it? Not a d—d bit more than the others, We all rode in a cluster—not pairs. The beach is wide and sandy, we galloped along in the face of a delightful breeze from the

sea, but I got no chance to speak. At length on our return I challenged Roma to a race. She rides like an Arab of the desert, fearlessand grace-Roma to a race. She rides like an Arab of the desert, fearlessand graceful; off we started down a lane that led through rows of negro cabins, her horse was fleet as the wind and she kept ahead of me a few yards, until all of a sudden she drew rein before a little cabin, in the yard of which were about a score of negro children, all the way from mushy babyhood to twelve or thirteen years old. She sprung to the ground, the little black imps crowded up around her, chattering and grinning like so many baboons, as she dealt out to them chunks of gingerbread which she carried in a satchel bag on her neck. By the time she was ready to remount the in a satchel bag on her neck. By the time she was ready to remount, the rest of the party had ridden up and the last one dutifully waited for her as if it were absolutely incumbent upon them to keep her in sight every moment! I earnestly wished the rising tide might sweep them out into the sea, but the sea was not so obliging. On our way back to the house, one of those impudent cub-doctors pushed himself up and began a disone of those impudent cub-doctors pushed himself up and began a discussion with Roma, she's always ready for discussions, which I consider very unlady-like, and positively, Cathy. before I knew it, I found myself riding by the side of Blaine's girl! You can't begin to imagine my feelings! What to say or do, or how to look, I did not know. It was dunpleasant! And to make it more so she kept up that high and mighty moral reproving sort of way which she put on since she's turned pious, and looked as if she thought I was the moral leper and ought to be ashamed of myself and not she. I never spoke a word. She turned her big, blue eyes on me. I looked away out on the boundless sea and we went on in silence until, just as we hove in sight of the others, I thought it best to appear to be on friendly terms, so I said, pointing to the ocean and the sail-boats sailing by: sail-boats sailing by:

"Beautiful scene, Madame—Thebideaux."

She turned her great blue eyes calmly upon me with that sort of reproving expression so exasperating and replied solemnly,

"Very beautiful, Mr.—Singleton."

Now, what the devil does this woman mean? Is she against me? Will she try to set the heiress against me? Thus, you see, Cathy, what a curious fix I am in. One whole day of my visit has gone and no progress made. I must come to an understanding to-morrow.

Your affectionate brother,

ARTHUR SINGLETON.

The second day it rained all day. Every one remained in doors; reading, talking and music passed the hours away. When Singleton retired that night he was in no good humor, especially was he wrathful with Madam Thebideaux. The watchful look in her eyes encaged him, the quiet way in which she managed to keep by Roma's side chraged him. If he found Roma in a corner, or on a sofa alone and joined her, up would sail the woman he most detested, or placidly, and with an inno-cent air, plant herself near the heiress, making some inquiry about one of the sick negro, cr some proposition of a beneficial character which she proposed to carry out. Singleton wondered if Roma did not see that this woman was doing her best to prevent privacy between them, yet she did not seem to see. She always receives Madam Thebideaux with respect, and listened to her with attention. Never was an elegant gentleman so confounded and confused by the unaccountable conduct of the odd guests assembled in Ashcourt. On the morning of the third day as all the company were on the porch, enjoying the delightful breeze, Roma was called out by one of the servants, after a short absence she came back with a grave face. She said she was sorry, but she would be compelled to leave her guests for some hours; she had been sent for by Daddy Dick, who was very ill; she was going immediately over to Richland to see him. Horses and boats were at the command of any who might wish to ride or row. She hoped Mr. Singleton would not find the time tedious.

Throwing all the power he could in his eyes, Singleton murmured for her ear alone that the light of the house would be

gone.

Roma laughed and hoped not-hoped there would, at least, be light enough to enable him and the others to amuse themselves in some pleasant way.

He replied by wanting to know how far it was to Richland,

where Daddy Dick lay sick.

"Six miles."

"And you disdain company?"

"On the contrary, company disdains me! I am not so selfish as to force any one to accompany me on my visits to sick negroes."

"It would not require much force to make me go," he said, meaningly. "I would rather go with you," he added, in a lower tone, "than stay with kings and princes. Will you not let me?" The question was put in a low tone, but Miss Charlmonte re-

plied so that all heard:

"Certainly, if you wish, but I give you warning you will be awfully bored. Will he not, Mama?"

"What is it, dear?"

"Mr. Singleton wishes to go with me to Richland. I tell him he will repent before he gets half way there."

"Perhaps Mr. Singleton likes quiet rides by the sea-side," re-

marked the mother, sweetly.

"Exactly what I delight in," replied Singleton, exultingly. At last—at last he saw his opportunity coming. "How do you go, Roma?" asked her mother.

"In the carriage. There are things to be carried. in an hour, Mr. Singleton."

"I am at your command any moment," replied the happy

Singleton.

Roma went away, but she did not immediately go to her room to get ready for the ride; putting on the sun-bonnet that hung in the back hall, she ran out at the back door and scampered as fast as she could in the direction of Old Dinah's cabin. She had seen Madame Thebideaux put a few delicacies in a basket, along with a Bible, and wend her way to Dinah's cabin for the purpose of administering both bodily and spiritual consolation. Arrived at the door, she heard Dinah's groans mingled with the Madame's fervent exhortations to hold fast to the Lord, to submit her heart and humble herself and kiss the rod of affliction, etc., etc. After waiting a moment for the exhortation to come to an end, and fearing there was no hope of that for the next hour, Roma ventured to interrupt the exercises by knocking loudly at the door. The white woman opened it, Roma whispered a few words in her ear, and then returned to the house as rapidly as she had left it.

The carriage stood before the hall door, Tally in command, his broad face less happy than usual on account of his daddy's illness. Hat in hand, he waited for his young mistress. Thetty and Damon brought baskets and parcels of things and stowed them away in the carriage. Singleton was on the porch, looking on with a satisfied air. Wilmer, who had heard his request to be permitted to accompany the heiress and the heiress's consent, stood watching the proceedings with a gloomy brow.

"She is yielding to his influence," was his bitter thought, "she is fascinated by his outside graces! God! what a fate for a girl like that!"

Roma came out equipped for the ride, bright and radiant. She glanced at the two men and asked Singleton if he yet intended to make a martyr of himself? He replied that martyrdom was what he was escaping—there could be no martyrdom in her company.

"Very well," she laughed, gayly, "on your own head be the consequences. You cannot say I did not give you warning. Can

he, Mr. Wilmer? You must bear witness."

She stepped into the carriage.

"Does it make you sick to ride with your back to the horses?" she asked, as Singleton took his seat by her side. She was on the back seat.

"Not exactly sick, but if you have no objection, I will face

them."

She instantly changed and took the front seat with her back to the horses.

"Does it make you sick?" he asked, not liking the move, he had counted on having her by his side all the way.

"Not the least. It never affects me."

"But why do you take it—why abandon this seat? Surely, there is room for us both. Do you disdain to sit by my side?" he questioned, with a wounded air.

"Disdain?—not the least! No; indeed! How can you ask such a question? You see, Madame Thebideaux can't bear this seat, it makes her deadly sick."

"Madame Thebideaux!"

"I hope you do not object to sitting by Madame Thebideaux?" she asked, gaily. Yet it was impossible not to observe the change, the utter revolution that his feelings had undergone at the mention of her name. He would have retreated even then but for the moment he was powerless to act one way or another. Disappointment, chagrin, rage overwhelmed him. Roma seemed not to be aware that any serious feeling was aroused. She bade

Thetty to beg Madame Thebideaux to come on. They were

waiting for her.

"Madame Thebby has so many old pets at Richland," she said, by way of explanation, "she has so many little things to get ready to take with her."

Singleton managed to choke down his rage enough to speak, though there were white dints about his nose, and two deep lines

between his brows, a sullen anger smouldered in his eyes.

"Does she always go with you?" he asked, making a desper-

ate effort to subdue or hide his resentment.

"To Richland? Not always, but often! She's so good to the old negro dames, reads the Bible to them, prays with them, and all that; they always want to see her. I hope you like Madame

"Like her! Why should I not," he laughed bitterly, as the object of his dislike came toward the carriage, a big basket in Large, fair, calm, serene—filled with holy thoughts, she came; Singleton could have strangled her. She took her seat by his side, apparently as much at her ease, as indifferent, as if he had been a dummy. She paid not the slightest attention to him, held the big basket on her lap and remarked to Ro-They went first to the ma that it was a delightful day to drive. overseer's house, whose wife, a little sallow woman with a big fat baby in her arms, welcomed them smilingly, and wanted to treat them to fresh buttermilk, which hospitality being declined, the little sallow mother betook herself to the pleasing duty of refreshing the fat baby from the fount nature had provided for that purpose.

The piazza running along the front of the house commanded a splendid view of the ocean. Roma again warned Singleton that he had better give up the intention of accompanying them any further on their mission of mercy to the sick. She recommendthat he should sit on the piazza and read until they called for

him on their way home.

Roma and Singleton were walking slowly up to the carriage as she made the suggestion, the "Blaine girl" was already seated

She surveyed them calmly as they came up.

"Do you not agree with me, Madame?" asked the girl. "Do you not advise Mr. Singleton to remain here until we come from Daddy Dick's? We shall only weary him."

"No," replied "Blaine's girl," with calm decision, "I do not agree with you, Miss Charlmonte. I think that Mr. Singleton can do nothing better than take up his cross, not once a year, or once a month, but every day and twice a day, until he experiences a change of heart."

This so exasperated poor Singleton, he turned livid with in-

dignation.

"A creature so vile as she had been, assume that superior admonitory air-" he came to a dead halt in the path, turned and walked off a little distance to a pomegranate tree laden with

golden fruit.

"May I pull one, Miss Charlmonte?" he asked, making a strong effort to subdue his anger.

Thesity to box Madame

"A dozen, if you like," she replied.
"Come and tell me which are ripest."

"She went up and pointed out the best apple.

"Why did you bring that abominable woman?" he said in a low tone as he reached up to pluck the fruit,

"You did not tell me that you thought her abominable; how

was I to know?"

"Well, you know now. I do hope you will sometimes let me

speak to you free from her rasping presence."

"How odd that you do not like her! She is a great favorite with all Ashcourt,—black and white. But we must hasten on. Daddy Dick will feel himself neglected if we delay."

Again they got in the carriage. Tally drove rapidly. It was finally settled that Singleton should continue the drive on the

beach and return in an hour for the ladies.

"I must have been mad," he said to himself, as he was whirled away, "mad when I fancied myself in love with that creature," meaning the obnoxious born-lady.

She was now utterly detestable, he had no faith in her. he did not believe it possible for any woman to reform after she had once sunk to degradation. He had felt it to be almost intolerable to sit by her side, the touch of her garments was disgusting, her air of superiority filled him with indignation, her presence poisoned every moment of his life

The two ladies found the old negro ill with pleurisy and fully

impressed with the belief that his time had come.

"De Lawd have called me dis time, Miss Roma," he said, speaking with a labored effort. "I aint got no mo' hope 'ceptin' to 'bey de Lawd's will. He am de way an' de life. He am de strength an' de 'spote o' dem dat puts der trus' in his wud.''

Roma was silent, but Madame Thebideaux responded with a fervent exhortation, after which Roma asked what the doctor

was doing for him.

"De doctor don't gin me no 'couragement, Miss Roma," replied the old man, "an', Miss Roma, I don't want no 'couragemen'; I's ready for to go de minute de good Lawd says de wud, an' it 'pears like, Miss Roma, as I continally hears ole Master a-callin' of me; pears like he's sorter lonesome in de oder wul widout ole Dick. You see, Miss Roma, we growed up wid one anoder, it natilly follows as he'd feel sorter loss, Miss Roma, widout ole Dick. I's willin' to go. I's dat willin for to jine ole Master, whar continally keeps a callin o' me-he do, Miss Roma, I heers him in de dead o' de night a-callin of me for ter come over to de oder side."

Roma's tears began to flow at the mention of the dear old man

she had loved so well.

"I sont for you, Miss Roma," resumed the old negro, speak-

ing with increased difficulty, "becaze I's gwine to see Mas Henry soon, an' I knows, Miss Roma, as he'll be axin' me 'bout you de fus' thing, becaze he sot mo' by you den any oder pursun on dis yeath, so I sent to ax you ef you's got no message ter sen' to your gran'-pa?—as will 'joice his heart to git.'

The girl sent a loving message which the old man, with child-

like faith, promised to deliver.

"I's knowed ole Master, Miss Roma," he said, "goin" on nigh bout seventy year, man an' boy. I knowed his natur, Miss Roma, from his inerds to his outerds. I feels a mose sutten, Miss Roma, as he's sorter loss ober dar, dout ole Dick, an' 'pears like I heers him a callin' o' me in de dead o' de night when de res' o' de folks is sleepin' den I feels 'im anear, an' den I heers 'im a-callin'. 'Pears like I heers 'im holler, 'O, Dick!' chirp an' crickety as he usent to holler when we was boys, an' went a-fishin' togedder; den agin I heers 'im, deep an' solemn-like as when we'd growd ole, he calls out, 'Dick! Come wid me!'' Den I knows, Miss Roma, as my time is nigh at han'. Ole Master's a-waiting for me an' I'm a gwine wid him, Miss Roma. We was so long wid one anoder, it's sorter hawd to part.''

After the old man had relieved his mind in this way,—his daughter and two granddaughters were weeping around him,—Madame Thebideaux asked if he would like to hear a chapter in the Bible read and then join in prayer and song. This seeming to please him, "Blaine's girl" led the devotional exercises with great fervor. While thus engaged, the carriage with Singleton, drove up. Daddy Dick's window was raised and the voices of the worshipers went out to his ear, clearest, loudest and most

fervent sounded the voice of the "Blaine girl."

The very sound stirred his ire.

"She dares to pray," he said, "she, the drunken vagabond!"
It gave him that sort of feeling as if the world was coming to an end, as if the very pillars of society were uprooted; as if law

and order were dying out or dead.

Presently the two ladies came out, and stood by the carriage while Tallyrand went in to see his father. Roma's eyes were red with recent tears, but her companion's were unstained. So completely did religious fervor fill her soul, it seemed to lift her up above the weakness of feeling sympathy with the small trials

of life, the temporary sorrows of earth.

When returning, the situation was slightly changed. Madame Thebideaux had the back seat entirely to herself. Singleton sat by Roma's side on the front, but the change did not satisfy him. To be immediately before those calm, conscious eyes, unable to look or speak without their criticial observation, was a rasping trial hard to bear, especially hard for so irritable and impatient a gentleman as Mr. Arthur. They drove home in silence. Roma ran upstairs to her mother, leaving Singleton and Madam Thebideaux on the steps. The latter looked at the former in a way he did not like.

"What do you mean?" he asked, in a tone of suppressed anger. "Why do you follow me thus? What do you wish?" "Step into the library and you shall know," she said.

They went in; he looked at her in sullen wrath.

"Why do you pursue me? Why thrust yourself upon me? I wish nothing to do with you. Can't you let me alone?"

"What is your business here—in this house?" she asked, ignoring his angry queries and putting her own with a confident air.

Singleton flushed red with burning anger.

"I rather think," he haughtily replied, "I might, with more propriety, ask what brings you to this house-you?"

There was a deal of bitter scorn in the "you."

"That is of no importance," she replied, "my presence or absence will harm nor benefit no one in this house—yours might."

"What do you mean?"

"What I say, that your presence might harm-your absence benefit."

"You cannot suspect me of dishonorable designs on any ine

mate here?" he asked, in black rage.

A slight, very slight smile of scorn passed over her lips. "Dishonorable?" she said, in that low, calm voice and with that air of looking down on him from a moral height that so outraged the gentleman's pride. "What you may choose to call your honorable designs, should they succeed, would cause more misery than your dishonorable—the fetters of your honorable designs would be more lasting than your dishonorable."

"Such sentiments are too foul to be uttered under this roof! I shall make known to the gentlemen relations of the lady of this house, the false colors you sail under. Pretended piety may impose upon inexperienced ladies, but men of the world know

how to value it at its worth."

Not one word did the "Blaine girl" condescend to reply to this burst of rage, but she gave him a look more exasperating, because more alarming than words would have been, then slowly

and majestically she marched out of the room.

Singleton felt beaten, he felt that he was groping in the dark; he did not know, how and why she was in Ashcourt, or how much, if anything, the ladies knew of her story. He felt that he had made a mistake when he threatened to expose her; he dared not expose her, lest he might expose himself. Angry, balked, hemmed in, insulted by a creature he scorned and despised, our poor Singleton strode the library floor in no enviable frame of mind.

"Oh, that I had her in a city! 'he cried out, in the rage of his heart. "Oh, that I had her in a city! City policemen know how to curb and quell insolent women of her class."

Unfortunately there were no policemen on the Island.

This was Singleton's last day at Ashcourt. If he meant to accomplish anything, he must find a chance that day. Remem-

bering to have heard some one say that it was Roma's custom always to be the first to come down to dinner, to amuse herself a few moments at the piano without an audience, he thought he would meet her and have the explanation over. Running up to his room, he made his toilet hastily, went down and ensconced himself in the bay window behind the curtain and waited. From his position he commanded a view of the drawing-room door, through which he looked, hoping to see the young lady come in; he had not waited long before he heard approaching footsteps. His heart beat violently, one might almost have imagined that a tremendous love agitated it. Perhaps after all, we may call the feeling that led him on, Love, if not of the woman, at least of the money. The pursuit of money may be as agitating as the pursuit of a woman. The footsteps came gently, slowly on, they reached the door, but, to Singleton's disgust, they were not the footsteps of the one he expected. The tall, slim old maid, the "Sister of Perpetual Toil", stood in the door a minute, her pale, thin face wearing a perplexed look, as if hesitating whether to come in or go on. Deciding on the former, she came slowly forward; straight on toward the bay window, whose occupant broke out in a cold sweat of fear lest she should bear down upon him and give him her charming society. she stopped short of that overt act; paused at a sofa which sat in front of the bay window, gently dropped herself upon it, giving Singleton a full view of the back of her chaste and snowwhite muslin cap, ornamented with lilac bows and strings.

What an embarassing position for a fastidious gentleman! Singleton hesitated whether to rush out or remain. Should he pursue the former course, politeness would compel him to speak a few words to Miss Susan. She would be sure to ask him about the ride and how he had left Daddy Dick. D-n Daddy Dick! He was in no humor to play the polite to ghostly old maids. So he remained perfectly still in the faint hope that the old lady would tire of solitude and betake herself to the flower garden, usually her favorite resort. While thus waiting and hoping, other footsteps came along the hall, heavier than Miss Susan's, evidently these were made by male feet. Their owner also stopped at the drawing-room door and looked in and our hidden friend had full view of the round, rosy-faced old gentleman, whose round, bald head had a thin fringe of red hair. Mr. Widgerly stood a moment or so, benevolently beaming down the drawing-room in the direction of the old maid, then waddled up on his short legs and settled himself on the sofa by Miss Susan's side.

The lilac ribbons fluttered. Was it agitation or age that made them tremble? Mr. Singleton had a charming view, not only of the back part of Miss Susan's muslin cap, but a back view of Mr. Widgerly's bald head and fringe of red hair. In his present state of mind, the two views were not particularly enlivening to Mr. Arthur. Could he have fled without being seen, he would

have rushed off without ceremony.

The two old people began to talk.

"My dear Susan," said the old gentleman, the beads of moisture breaking out on his benevolent old smooth sconce. "My dear Susan, I have come for my answer. I'm quite impatient, my dear T'ye no time to less. What do you say dear Susan?"

dear Susan, I have come for my answer. I'm quite impatient, my dear. I've no time to lose. What do you say, dear Susan?" "Oh, dear me!—dear me! Mr. Widgerly, I'm so surprised—so very much surprised—"replied the old lady in modest confusion, her lilac bows trembling with virgin timidity. Sixty five and never before an offer! Sixty-five and never before a declaration of love! Is it any wonder that withered old maid was too amazed and astonished to speak decidedly?

"Say 'yes,' Susan; only say 'yes'," urged her ancient lover, tenderly circling his lady-love's virgin waist, with one short, stubby arm. "Say 'yes', my dear, and it won't seem so surprising. You'll get used to it, my dear,—you will, indeed. There's nothing like being used to a thing to make it go easy, you may

depend, my dear."

Singleton began to think that they were two escaped old lunatics. The lilac bows fluttered, the fervent old lover pressed

his beloved close to his side, while she murmured softly.

"But it's all so wonderful, Mr. Widgerly—so very wonderful! I don't know what to think! I really don't—I don't know what to do. It's all so strange, so very strange. Perhaps I am dreaming! I'll wake up presently and find myself sewing in my own little room."

"No you won't, Susan, not a bit, my dear! No, you'll wake up and find yourself in Widgerly house and looking after your old man's comforts, my dear. That's what you'll do; make his coffee for him, chat with him when he's eating. My girls are all married and gone, my dear. I'll take care of you and you'll take care of me—mutual benefit, mutual happiness, my dear. Say 'yes', only say 'yes', and we'll both be settled comfortably in Widgerly place before the week's out."

"Why, La! Mr. Widgerly, to-day's Friday. We couldn't

do it so soon as that?"

Then the unhappy Singleton heard a resounding noise that resembled the popping of a champagne bottle, and soon afterward he saw the two old lunatics clasp hands and trot out of the room and out of the house for a sentimental stroll among the flowers. Singleton watched them through the window and saw the old male lunatic pluck a red peony and present it to the ancient lady of his love, as gallanfly as if the twain yet walked in the enchanted land of youth and poesie, and the pale old maid pinned the peony to the white muslin kerchief that crossed her virgin breast, and then the two old lovers strolled on hand in hand, to the wonderment and disgust of the handsome Singleton who begun to fancy he had come to an enchanted Island, where all the laws of life and customs of society were reversed, where the old make love, and the vile preach purity, and elegant

ed did not come to his

gentlemen are at a discount, and of no force in the world. no opportunity for speaking in private to Roma presented itself on this last day, Singleton wrote a note requesting an interview, and dispatched it by Damon.

"To-morrow, after breakfast, in the Library," was the penciled reply, which the gentleman thought to the point if laconic.

CHAPTER XXXII. and more based or well

AN INTERVIEW AT LAST.

The Ashcourt guests expected to leave immediately. Horses and carriages were at the door. Mr. Widgerly took a tender leave of Miss Susan, who really seemed to be growing fond of the idea of pouring coffee, and turning down the bed-cover, etc., for her old suitor. While they all stood on the verandah taking leave, Singleton remained apart, meditating on the coming interview, how best to manage it, what to say, what to do, etc. Suddenly Madame Thebideaux was close by his side.

"Do you leave the Island to-day, Mr. Singleton?" she asked, with that serene, complacent air that Singleton fancied came

from self-righteonsness and impudence.

He started back too indignant to reply in words, his eyes and contracted brow spoke his resentment. But neither the anger in the eyes or on the brow, in the least disturbed the serenity of "Blaine's girl."

"I suppose," she said, "that the interview you are to have

with Miss Charlmonte will decide your movements?"

Had Singleton given way to his feelings, he would have slain her on the spot.

"What do you know of any interview?" he asked, in a low

tone of suppressed rage.

"Miss Charlmonte mentioned it."

"You tried to poison her mind against me?" "I have said nothing yet. I hope there will be no need of saying anything," was her enigmatical reply, after which she walked away. Roma came in from bidding her cousin, Constance, adieu at

the carriage door.

"Now, Mr, Singleton," she said, frankly, smiling in his handsome face, "I am at your service. Shall we go into the library, or stay here on the porch?"

The porch? When there, not ten feet distant, was "Blaine's

girl"

Singleton felt that he was badly treated.

"If it is all the same to you, Miss Charlmonte," he replied,

stiffly, "we will go in the library."

He had asked for a private interview and she proposed the porch! Was this indifference or affectation? They went into the library.

At last-at last he was alone with the girl. The moment for which he had waited and watched for three days had come, and now, strange to say, his confidence, his courage, his hopes, were almost gone. So severely had he been tried, so continually crossed, so deeply vexed; that his presence of mind, his graceful ease and elegance of manner for which he was so distinguished did not come to his aid. Miss Charlmonte's clear, calm eyes were fixed upon his confused face, his pained and paling face. As he did not speak, she begun by hoping that he had not found the Island so very dull. After the gayeties of the city, she This gave feared he had found country life rather monotonous. him the cue. Singleton broke out with genuine emotion. Did she think she had treated him kindly—generously? She very well knew that he had come to see her and her alone; had she not systematically avoided him? She had wounded him by her indifference or dislike, whichever it was. His devotion, his deep, undying love surely deserved some little consideration from her.

Ignoring the reference to Love and devotion, with an appearance of polite concern, Miss Charlmonte disclaimed any intention of neglect. She and her mother had desired to make his visit pleasant, her mother would be deeply pained if any guest should leave Ashcourt, feeling that he had been inhospitably treated. Her mother's delicate health and recent suffering must plead her pardon if Ashcourt had not been all it should be.

This rather artful speech threw Singleton off the track which he had marked out to pursue. For a brief instant anger held him silent or rather he was so angry, he held himself silent to conceal it. When he did speak, it was not to make a love appeal but reproaches. Pale and trembling, he walked the floor as he talked.

"This is but a part of the unkind system you have pursued since my arrival? What has changed you? I am not changed. Just as you left me, you see me now—as true, as loving; you are not the same. You avoid me as if I were a viper. What have I done that you should so hate me?" etc, and so on.

To all of which the young lady listened with a calm face,

looking at him with her clear, reflective eyes.

"Really, Mr. Singleton," she replied, when he paused, "you ask such remarkable questions—you take such odd fancies. If I wished to avoid you, would I have induced Mama to have you here for three days? If I looked upon you as a viper, would I have taken you in the carriage and talked with you by the hour? Do young ladies go out driving with vipers? Besides, what possible reason can I have for hating you? Do you think so badly of me as to suppose I would, for no cause, hate the brother of a lady who showed us so much kindness when we were in her city? Do, I beg you, dismiss from your mind as a morbid dream, such unpleasant suspicions, and bid Mama a gra-

cious farewell. Mama will be seriously hurt if she thinks you go

from Ashcourt dissatisfied."

"She never got that letter," was the one consolatory idea that her speech brought him, "she never got it or she would not ask what possible cause there was for hatred-some women would have seen in that letter cause enough for anger and hatred. Then arose the disturbing question, what had so changed the girl if not the letter? That she was changed he could not doubt. It is human nature to respect what is difficult to gain. Had this girl been madly in love with Singleton, had she been powerless to resist his commands and persuasions, he would have been as careless as she, but to see her standing there serene, polite, slim, graceful, elegant, unattainable, Singleton almost felt as though he were really in love. Pretty well convinced that she had not received the letter he felt that he might refer to it with safety. He wanted to be satisfied on that one point; he asked her if she had received his letter in reply to hers informing him that her grandfather's will was not found?

"Oh! yes," she replied carelessly, "it came in due time."

"You had it?" Singleton's heart sunk.

"Certainly. I should have replied but I saw no necessity-

you did not expect a reply did you?"

Then he broke out in explanations and declared the letter did not express his true feelings, it was written in a moment of madness, he was hardly in his right mind, he had suffered severe losses himself, he loved her so passionately the thought of losing her crazed him, it was a false, foul letter, she should not permit it to turn her heart against him, etc., and so on. To all of which Roma listened with a calm, unmoved face—alas! she had utterly lost faith in his truth. His anger, his pathos, his reproaches, touched her no more than the over wrought acting of the buskined hero of the boards. She resolved to end this profitless and unpleasant interview.

"Pray," she said with a gesture as if sweeping the subject away, "pray give yourself no concern, I beg you, about that letter, it was a very proper letter, I find no fault with it I assure you. Shall we now join Mama? She is waiting to bid you farewell before she retires to her room. Poor Mama has not yet re-

covered her strength. Mama!"

Walking to the door as she spoke she saw her mother and Wilmer in the hall; they both came to her call.

"Mama, Mr. Singleton wishes to bid you adieu."

Tallyrand and the carriage were at the door to convey Mr. Singleton to the village inn.

"What is the matter with him, dear?" asked Roma's mother

as the carriage drove off, "he looked very strangely."

"Strangely, Mama? I think everyone must admit that he is

very handsome."

The poor man had not been able to conceal his chagrin, his bitter disappointment, nor was Wilmer able to conceal the intense and deep delight the sight of that disappointment gave

"The past three days have proved a blessing—I feared they would prove a curse," he said to Roma as they strolled out on the lawn looking toward the sea.

"How a blessing?" she asked softly for she felt the impas

sioned glances cast upon her.

"They have removed a lingering, tormenting fear, a fear which in spite of every effort would come back to me at times. I might beat it down one day and think I had killed it forever, up at some unexpected moment it would pop its hateful head and hiss at me."

"Do you—mean—snakes?"

"No, I mean something a million times worse than snakes. I mean the fear—the fear that you might care ever so little for that sleek, handsome fellow—such fears are ten times more tormenting than adders or rattlesnakes."

"And you think now that I do not?"
"I know you do not—Oh! Roma—"

The passionate pleading in his eyes went to her heart. They were in the vine covered summer house, roses and green leaves embowered them. He drew her to his side, she did not resist, he looked into her dark eyes and saw something in their depths which answered to the yearnings of his soul and, all of a sudden, the universe expanded, all space became radiant with light, he clasped her close to his heart and the Paradise our first parents lost was regained at last by these two. Did she love him? More than once Roma had asked herself this question in the last few months, not yet was it answered to her satisfaction. Of one thing she was quite sure, viz: that she entirely approved of him. Mentally and morally he suited her. She respected his mind and had faith in his morals and believed in his tenderness. There are loves and loves. The poet says:

"Few men find what they love, Or could have loved, but accident, blind contact, And the strong necessity of loving, Hath removed antipathies."

In this case there never had been antipathies to remove. Had Wilmer given evidence of his love before Singleton's effort to win, the chances are the girl would never have indulged even a fancy for the handsome man. It is not so much masculine beauty that wins a woman's heart as the power of masculine feeling. Some woman has said that women yield more to the strength of their lover's passion than to the power of their own. Nothing is more true. The severe training to which the civilized woman has been subjected makes the well-balanced woman more self-governed than the male of her kind; she will not permit herself to love until she has reason to think she is beloved. Five pairs of our friends are destined to matrimony; two already wear the yoke. Miss Susan and Mr. Widgerly, being the oldest,

Were naturally the most impatient, at least the gentleman was, he said he had no time to lose in waiting, so they were married two weeks from the day they met in Ashcourt. It was a happy match, neither ever repented. Miss Susan's days crept on as smoothly as a summer's dream. Roma and Wilmer joined hands to walk side by side down the vale of life. Mrs. Charlmonte learned to love her son-in-law almost as much as she did her daughter. Wilmer, believing the law unjust in its dealing with woman, refused to avail himself of the power given a husband over his wife's property. He had a contract drawn up settling every dollar of her inheritance on Roma and signed it before marriage. Shortly after their marriage Roma, without consulting her husband, conveyed to him the absolute right to one-fourth of the Ashcourt estate, which was one-half of her portion. Roma always considered that exactly half, in equity, belonged to her mother although the legal title vested in her.

The fifth pair is made of the handsome Arthur and the happyhearted widow Tubinger. As this couple are such favorites we

shall more parctiularly describe their wedding.

Mrs. Singleton, having very little hope that her brother would succeed in his Southern scheme, bent her energies to the task of keeping the widow in a good humor. She represented that her brother had been hurried off on very disagreeable business—trying to secure a large sum of money due him of which he was about to be defrauded. He sent a world of love and begged not to be forgotten while gone.

"The dear fellow!" cried the glowing and gratified widow, "as

if I could forget him!"

The fact is Mrs. Tubinger was perfectly happy in the delightful duty of getting up her wedding trousseau. She reveled in fine things, the magnificent morning dresses, the divine dinner dresses, the heavenly evening dresses, the lovely laces, the ribbons, shoes, gloves and all the hundred and one gewgaws that go to fit out a bride, filled her days with such delightful excitement she had no time to grow jealous or suspicious. That her lover did not write never disturbed her in the least. Mr. Tubinger had been a very indifferent correspondent, never writing except on business, she herself thought one letter every six or seven months quite a job to get through. The first and only letter she had ev r received from her adored Arthur was the one declaring his passion and proposing marriage, as this was the composition of his sister it was a very effective production, and there was quite enough love in it to last the happy widow for some time. Whenever she felt like hearing from her fiancee she got that first and only letter out of the little box in which she kept it and read it over with a glowing face and gurgling spirits. As long as she had this on hand where was the use of another love letter? What more could another tell her? This was full of adoration, it satisfied her heart, it sufficed. She was happy in her wedding preparations, intending to have a grand wedding

banquet and invite not only her city friends but all of her country kin. Mrs. Singleton discouraged this idea as much as possible, she knew that her brother, not at all proud of his bride, would hate publicity, the widow, however, would not change her programme. Mrs. Singleton looked for her brother's return with some uneasiness his creditors were annoying, and she lived in daily dread that the widow would come to know the state of his affairs.

At length, crest-fallen, dejected and pale, the poor fellow pre-

sented himself before her.

"Well Cathy," he said with a sickly smile, "here I am ready to obey orders."

And it was time indeed, there was work to do, creditors to be appeased, the widow to be courted and kept in a good humor. When he heard of the proposed grand banquet and the coming of all the country kin, the three sisters from Canaan-four-corners with all their troops of children, he implored his sister to do her utmost to prevent the banquet, he said he felt far more like hiding himself in a cave than presiding at a wedding supper for every fool to stare at and criticise. Mrs. Singleton did her

"You see, my dear Amelia," she said, "Arthur is so retiringall authors are, he shrinks from promiscuous crowds, if you only will have fewer people, besides, my dear, don't you know how it is with lovers? He wants you all to himself; indeed I heard him say only yesterday that he is never happy when he sees you surrounded by a crowd, he is so devoted to you, I dare say he's a little selfish—all lovers are."

The widow was radiant.

"Oh! the dear fellow-the dear, darling fellow!" she cried glowing all over with pleasure, "but he'll have enough of me after we're married, I promise him that, he'll have no cause to complain of me I warrant. But you see, dear, it's too late now to go back on the supper, everything's ordered and the invitations gone. You know, dear, I'd promised Sister Sharpe and Sister Blox and Sister Maddox, years ago I promised they should come to my wedding; it's too late, too late to stop 'em now they've got their dresses all ready and new shoes for the children. If dear Arthur had only spoken in time—'

But dear Arthur had not spoken in time and so the banquet

was a fixed fact.

The wedding day dawned bright and beautiful. The morning papers came out with a flourishing notice of a social event in high life; the bride was pronounced the most accomplished and wealthy lady ir the city, the bride-groom was an author of high repute, he had spent several years in Europe acting as correspondent for the English journals and was now engaged on a work of considerable size and importance. To this size had grown the little white lie manufac ured on the spur of the moment by his sister and first told to the Island girl, afterward to the widow. her wedding preparations; jetending melag n griedThe latter mentioned it confidentially to Mr. Huntitem, her nephew's chum, who stated the fact in a local paragraph in the Courier from which it was reproduced in other papers until it became as well established as many other facts, or rather falsehoods.

Mr. Puffington, in a tall stove-pipe hat and white gloves, drove the brother and sister to the Tubinger mansion. The latter felt a sweet calmness stealing over her at the prospect of having all her anxieties on poor Arthur's account forever put to rest; she had never been free from a haunting fear that something might turn up to make the widow break the engagement, now, she thanked Heaven, the danger was drawing to an end. As to poor Arthur he had the appearance of a martyr and remarked, with a gloomy brow, that he felt as if he were going to his own funeral. This vexed his sister, she reproved him sharply telling him there was not a better woman in the city than Amelia and she was so devoted to him; he didn't deserve his good fortune. "The devil of it is," he sighed, "I'm not devoted to her."

"That's a very small matter, you ought to be ashamed to complain in that way, you really ought, Arthur," returned his sister jerking at the carriage window to let it down, "How few women marry the men they're fond of I'd like to know? Is it any worse for a man than a woman? Was I fond of Jack Singleton when I married him? Father said Jack was a good match and I took him; I suppose we were as happy as ordinary people."

"Jack was a very handsome fellow and a gentlemanly; besides women are different from men, nobody expects women to have their own way about things and it's blamed hard on me, say what you please it's blamed hard—a great blowsy, frowsy, noisy widow. Then you know, Cathy, I never did intend to put my

neck in the matrimonial yoke."

"You talk folly when you talk of yokes, you know very well it isn't the man who wears the yoke, it's the woman; you know that the moment after you are married you are the master of your wife's fortune; you are an ungrateful fellow. What would you think if you were in Amelia's place?"
"I'll be d—d if I'd be such a fool as to marry! What fools

women are anyhow."

"If you profit by their folly you should have the decency to stop complaining. She'll make you a good wife."
"Oh! bother!"

The carriage stopped before the brilliantly lighted Tubinger mansion. A long row of carriages stood on the other side of the street. A little, suave mannered, keen eyed man met them at the door and ushered them in. Mrs. Singleton went up stairs to dispose of her wraps, her brother was shown into a sitting room in which were assembled all of the bride's country kin, if Canaan-four-corners could be called country; it was a village with two churches, two schools, one blacksmith shop and several grocery shops to say nothing of two shops in which were sold dry

goods by the yard and notions of all sorts. Mr. Blackstone Coke Sharpe, dressed in his own wedding suit which he kept for festive occasions, introduced the little, suave mannered, keen eyed gentleman as his father, Solomon Sharpe, Esq., Lawyer from Canaan-four-corners. Then, as it seemed to the agitated bridegroom, he was introduced to an innumerable horde of Canaanfour-cornerites. First there was the bride's elder sister Mrs. Sharpe and her five daughters, the Misses Sharpe, aged all the way from fifteen up to thirty. After shaking hands with all these there came the bride's younger sister Mrs. Blox, a big, bouncing, friendly-faced women between whom and the bride a strong family likeness existed. Mrs. Blox gave her new brother a resounding kiss; she had her youngest, a white headed, fat squab with staring blue eyes, in her arms and she coaxed it to "kissy-wissy its new unky-wunky" at the same time holding up to the fastidious gentleman the little white headed horror whose little, pug nose, none too dry, dipped in somewhere among his silky beard. The delicate Arthur had dreamed of purgatory but this surpassed all dreams. Sister Blox had done her duty to her country, seven other little Bloxes there were. Each and every little Blox was white headed and each and every little Blox had a round rosy face ornamented with a pug nose and staring blue Each and every one of these delightful little creatures clung tightly to its mother's skirts and stared at the new relation for the first time appearing before their vision, and each and every one was made to shake hands with the new relation in the most condescending and friendly way. Mrs. Blox, in the charming vocabulary she had invented for the benefit of her infant progeny, urged them to shake their "new unky-wunky hand," the "new unky-wunky" grew faint and dizzy and leaned on the mantle for support.

"And here's another sister," said the little old lawyer in a tone as sweet and suave as if he were bringing up another nugget of pure gold to bestow on the happy bridegroom instead of

another fat, chunky, red faced sister-in-law.

"Sister Maddox permit me to introduce you to Sister Amelia's affianced," said the little old lawyer suavely and sweetly, rubbing his hands gently together as if he were washing them, "Sister Maddox—Brother Singleton."

Sister Maddox shook her new brother's hand with warmth and

force.

"A very presentable man, Brother Sharpe," she said looking him over with an eye of approval, "very presentable, indeed! if his inwards be as well favored as his outwards, Brother Sharpe, he'll do. I hope he's fond of prayer-meetings, Brother Sharpe, Brother Tubinger was rather loose on prayer-meetings if you'll remember, Brother Sharpe, rather a godless man was Brother Tubinger. Be you fond of the Lord's house, Brother Singleton?"

Brother Singleton's lips were white and his handsome brow broke out in beaded drops of agony as he gasped forth something intended to imply that he was moderately fond of the house in question.

Sister Maddox was not the only representative of the Maddox family present, the four Misses Maddox stood around their mother, waiting to be introduced to their new uncle.

"Amelia Jane," said Sister Maddox, calling to the eldest of her little flock, a stout rosy-cheeked lass of fourteen or fifteen, "come and kiss your Aunt Amelia's new husband. Jane is sister Amelia's namesake, Brother Singleton."

Amelia Jane performed the kiss.

"Eliza Ann, shake hands with your new uncle. Sophrony, come forrered—don't you see your uncle's waiting to speak to you? Give your right hand, Sophrony. Show your manners, or your uncle will think you had no bringin' up at all."

"Mary Amandy, come and kiss your uncle."

Mary Amandy was the youngest, and a fat little squab she was, with towy hair dragged up to the top of her head and tied in a pig-tail, something after the Chinese fashion. Mary Amandy was of a friendly disposition, and after she had bestowed a smacking kiss on the handsome bridegroom's cheek, she showed a friendly desire to be on good terms with her new relative, clung around his legs, pulled at his fingers, calling him "Unky! Unky!"

Sister Blox and Sister Sharpe, with all the little Bloxes and all the grown up Sharpes stood around staring at the unhappy Arthur. Sister Sharpe saw his palor and attributed it to the sentimental occasion. She stood by him and fanned him with a turkey-tail fan. Sister Maddox offered to rub his head with vinegar if it ached, while Sister Blox thought if "Unky—wunky would hold baby—waby, and kissy—wissy its sweet 'ittle—wit-tle footsy—tootsy,'' he'd feel better.

Before the wretched Mr. Arthur had time to accept or reject Sister Blox's delightful proposition, the bride sailed in, shining in white satin and lace and flowers and white kid gloves, and there was a general exclamation of delight and admiration from all the Canaan-four-Cornerites.

"Time flies, my dear Amelia," said the little old lawyer, laving his hands softly in the air. "Time flies, my dear; if we mean to get married to-night, we must set about it. company wait, the Bishop waits. Are we all ready now?"
"Oh, I'm all ready, brother Sol," replied the bride in a loud,

cheerful voice, squeezing the hand of her intended, which she had seized as soon as he came to her side. "I'm ready, brother Sol, but I don't know whether Arthur is or not."

The tender glance and the tender squeeze which accompanied this little arch speech, was gallantly met by the groom, who murmured that he had been ready for the last six months.

"Very well, then, my dears, since you are both ready, we may as well get it over," said the suave-mannered little lawyer, in the softest of tones. "Step this way, my dear Amelia, he

paper is ready for your signature."

The little old lawyer, stepping softly as a cat, led the way to a table in a distant corner of the room, on which were pen, ink

and an open paper, with a rather formidable legal look about it.
"The paper? Oh, the tiresome paper!" cried the bride, following the little, old, keen-eyed lawyer and still holding, closeclasped in her large fleshy hand, the aristocratic digits of her lover.

"What is it," inquired Singleton, a sudden misgiving coming

into his mind.

"Oh, I don't pretend to know. I never do understand lawbusiness. Brother Sol attends to all that. I never bother, ex-

cept to do what he tells me."

'Put your name here, my dear sir, right here," said the little old lawyer, as gently and sweetly as though he were asking the bridegroom to sign his name to a reciept for the gift of a brown You, being the gentleman," said the little lawstone mansion. yer, persuasively, "must have precedence of the lady,—right here, my dear sir," indicating with his forefinger, the exact spot on which he wanted the signature set.

"What is it?" asked Singleton, a cold chill creeping down his

"Merely a little formality, my dear sir," replied the suave little lawyer, rubbing his hands gently, "merely a legal formality-nothing more-nothing more, I assure you; quite customary on such occasions—quite. It only wants your two signatures—yours here, my dear sir; Amelia's here, just under it."

"I-I-I don't quite understand," stammered Singleton, beginning to understand too well, the beaded drops of anguish breaking out like dew on his brow. Was the wealth for which he was striving so hard, about to elude his control? Was he to be dependent on the bounty of his wife instead of becoming the master of her fortune?

"Shall I read it to you, my dear sir, or will you glance over it, yourself?" asked the little lawyer, in dulcet whispering

tones, smiling sweetly on the agitated bridegroom.

"Oh, for gracious goodness sake, Brother Sol! Don't go and bother us now with your tedious law papers! We'll sign—sign anything, short of a death warrant, rather than hear read one of your everlasting law-papers. We'll sign—we know it's all right,

if you say so-dont't we, Arthur?"

The bridegroom's white face and sweat-beaded forehead, did not indicate any very strong conviction that all was right, on the contrary, one might imagine that he thought all was wrong, terribly wrong, woefully wrong. He took the paper in his trembling hand and fixed his dazed eyes upon its characters, but had each letter been disconnected from its fellows and dancing an independent jig on it's own hook, he would have understood no less. At first glance, the letters seemed blurred in one indistinct mass, then as he gazed intently, they began their jigdancing, and the longer he looked, the more viciously alive they became. The legal phrases, first parties and second parties, and covenants and agrees and whereases and aforesaids—he gazed on until these horrid words became alive and began to crawl over the paper like hideous vermin, greatly to his confusion of mind; he became dizzy in head and weak in the legs. He shook like a leaf in the wind.

"Is it a marriage contract?" asked his sister, who had just

come in, and saw that something was wrong.

"Something of that nature, my dear Madam—something, yes," suavely replied the little keen-eyed lawyer, laving his hands gently in the invisible water. "Merely a formality, my dear madam—quite customary on such occasions; quite in conformatical and all the descriptions."

atory with established usages—quite."

"Is there any necessity for such a thing?" asked the sister, bravely bent on brow-beating the lawyer and putting aside the paper. "Surely," she added, with sarcasm, "if a lady is willing to trust herself with the man of her choice, she should not be afraid to trust what is of far less importance. It is a severe—a very severe reflection on Arthur—very severe and very unkind."

"Not at all, my dear madam—not the least in the world! There is no question of trust—none whatever; my sister-in-law reposes the profoundest trust, the very profoundest trust in the

gentleman of her choice."

"If Mrs. Tubinger has no confidence in me," spoke up Mr. Arthur, stiffly, his sister's bold air infused confidence in him, "she should not have accepted my hand. That's the view I take of it. Very wounding to my feelings—very. A husband is the natural head of the family, as I have been taught to think."

"Very true—quite true. You put the case in very good form my dear sir,—very good indeed," assented the little lawyer, in the most amiable way, smiling softly on his future brother-in-law. "No one can deny the point you make; not at all—the law will bear you out, the law of God and man, my dear sir,—fully. This paper, however,—ehem!—as I take it, does not militate against any marital right, contemplated by the law. Not at all; the law, my dear sir, is extremely careful of the marital rights of husbands—extremely indeed. This paper is, however, (laying his fore-finger tenderly and lovingly on the paper) merely a legal formality, quite customary, indeed, necessary on such occasions."

The little old lawyer looked as benevolent and amiable as if

he were bestowing a fortune on the couple.

"But why the necessity?" persisted Mrs. Singleton, with a

darkening brow. "I see no necessity."

"Precisely, my dear madam, quite to be expected of a lady—very much so of a lady not acquainted with the forms of law; you see, my dear madam, only legal minds are quite up to the

forms and phrases, technicalities and equities of the law. Ladies

not to be supposed—by no means—the fair sex—"

"Had there existed any necessity for this sort of thing," said Mrs. Singleton, with a still darker shade on her brow, the white dints showing themselves around her nostrils, "we, my brother I mean, should have been informed of it before this. To spring a paper like that on us—on my brother, at this late moment is certainly very trying to his feelings."

"What if I refuse to sign it?" asked Mr. Arthur, with a confi-

dent look.

"As you please, my dear sir," suavely, laving his hands, "of course, not the slightest compulsion—exactly as you please."

Mrs. Singleton fancied she saw in the little lawyer's eyes a twinkle of satisfaction at the prospect of her brother's refusal. She turned to the bride.

"My dear Amelia, is this done by your direction? Have you

no confidence in the man you love enough to marry?"

"In Arthur? (with open-eyed frankness). Do you mean Arthur? Of course, I have every confidence in the world in Arthur.

Would I marry him if I had not? Good Gracious, no!"

"If you have the confidence; if you trust him as a gentleman—you know him better than your relations, Amelia, you know how long he has been devoted to you; your trust is all that is necessary. Will you permit Arthur to be tortured at such a time as this?"

"I don't know—what do I know of law things?" replied the widow, with open-eyed innocence. "I never know,—Brother

Sol does all that."

"Then, my dear Amelia, I'm sure that Arthur is glad to hear you say so. I did not believe it of you. You are too true a wo-

man to distrust the man who adores you."

"Lord! Cathy, don't talk so solemn as if I was to blame! You make me feel as if—as if poor, dear Arthur was about to be hung, or something dreadful, and I was to blame! What odds will it make if Arthur signs that tiresome paper? Don't blame me if it has to be signed. Could I help Mr. Tubinger's going and putting that foolish thing in his will? If Arthur wants me to lose all the property that Mr. Tubinger left me, rather than sign a foolish paper, all right, I'm willing. I can stand poverty if he can, but I'm sure it's much nicer to have plenty of money. I'd like to keep it just on Arthur's account. I want Arthur to have plenty of money."

The keen-eyed little lawyer with the suave manners, smiled pleasantly at this little speech, rubbed his hands gently and looked inquiringly from the brother to the sister and the sis-

ter to the brother.

His son, Blackstone Coke Sharpe, had stood by all this time, a close, but silent observer, his bold, black eyes merrily watching the progress of the game.

"Ha!" he now burst out admiringly, "Rum, old brick!"

which compliment was supposed to be intended for the defunct

Tubinger.

"Do I understand you to say," asked Mrs. Singleton, with increasing anxiety, "that the late Mr. Tubinger required such a paper as that to be signed before his widow can marry?"

"Ask brother Sol. Brother Sol knows all about it. Brother Sol says unless we both sign, we'll lose every piece of my prop-

erty, but if Arthur would rather not—"

"Of couse not, my dear, we didn't understand, if it was dictated by Mr. Tubinger it can't be helped, it wasn't the signing that troubled Arthur, it was the distrust, Amelia, that hurt his feelings."

Feeling that there was no retreat the paper was signed and the bride, perfectly radiant, leaning on her handsome Arthur's arm, sailed into the grand drawing room where the Bishop in his

robes waited ready to tie the knot.

A buz of admiration greeted their entrance. Some of the ladies thought the bridegroom was just too handsome, and some thought the bride's dress too lovely. The supper was indeed a feast, the kin from Canaan-four-corners were lost in wonder and amazement at its abundance and luxury, and enjoyed themselves to the highest extent. After the ceremony was over Mrs. Singleton cleared her brow of its shadow and gave herself up to the business of being agreeable; later on, feeling tired out, she retired to the little dressing room where she had left her wraps, and lay down on the couch to rest a moment or so before going The door was open that led into the next room which was the bridal chamber, elegantly fitted up and lighted brilliantly; Mrs. Singleton was in the dark. She had not been many minutes alone before voices in the bridal chamber arrested her attention. She recognized the voices as those of the two Sharpes, father and son.

"Ha!" said the son looking around, "grand style! tip-top fur-niture! Aunt Mely don't mind money."

"Very neat, very neat indeed," said the less exuberant

father.

"I'll be hanged, though, if I didn't begin to think that the thing would all be off and there'd be no need for a bridal chamber to-night at any rate," said the son.

"Yes, it kinder looked that way at one time," assented the

father.

"It went devilishly against his grain to sign that paper, hang me! if I didn't think he'd refuse outright. If he had, what would Aunt Mely have done? Would she have gone on without it?"

"Not she—not she."

"But she's awfully fond of him, would she let him go?"

"She's fond of him, yes, but she's fond of her money too. Your Aunt Mely's no fool, she's one of the sharpest business women I know, she's willing to give her husband a good living, but she means to hold the purse, your Aunt Mely knows the

power of the purse as well as anyone. She's heard that the fellow's a gambler, she'll never be fool enough to give her property to the management of a gambler."

"Ha!" said the young fellow, "I didn't know Aunt Mely was

so sharp. The female mind-ha!"

"You needn't fancy your aunt is blind, she sees well enough, but never lets on. That was a shrewd dodge of hers, that—laying the whole thing on poor old dead and buried Tubinger."

"You don't mean to say-"

"Yes I do mean to say she got that up on the spur of the moment."

"Ha! you astound me—the female mind—who would have

thought it ?-ha!-"

"Well perhaps after all," sighed the weary sister of the bridegroom after the Sharpes were gone, "perhaps it is best so-Arthur needs to be restrained. And to think she is sharp enough to deceive me."

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